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A HOPEFUL WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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RED ROB, THE BOY ROAD AGENT!

BY OLL COOMES,

Author of "Dakota Dan," "Bowie-Knife Ben," "Old Hurricane," "Hawkeye Harry," "Death-Notch, the Destroyer," "One-Armed Alf," etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE WAGON TRAIN.

An emigrant train was creeping slowly and laboriously along the valley of a small tributary of the Rio Grande, toward Conejos, a little Spanish-Mexican town of southern Colorado.

It was a warm May day; there was no cool shade in which to rest, no breeze to fan the brows of the weary travelers. A cloud of dust hanging upon the air, marked for miles the course they had come, and the village before them, now plainly visible, was the end of their day's journey.

The train consisted of six canvas-covered wagons, with four mules harnessed to each, and an African jehu mounted upon each near wheeler, with a long whip in his hand and a sleepy look in his eyes.

There were, also, some extra mules and several ponies and saddle-horses, led and driven behind the train.

The party consisted of some twenty persons, including men, women and children; half of all were blacks.

There were three white families, the St. Kenelms, the Boswells, and the Gilbrests, in the party. The blacks were their servants.

The St. Kenelms and Gilbrests were from northern Missouri, the Boswells from southern Iowa — all living near neighbors for many years. The two first-named had once been wealthy, but the war of the States had impoverished them; and, too proud-spirited to sit down and weep over their lost fortunes, they resolved to strike out and retrieve their vanished wealth in the great, wide West, the Boswells accompanying them. Most of the blacks had been slaves of the St. Kenelms and Gilbrests, but after their emancipation they were retained as employees by their old masters.

By some means or other our friends had heard that the valleys and mountains of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado were teeming with untold wealth, which awaited only willing hands to convert it into use. And thither were they now going — into the midst of unknown dangers — far from the habitations of civilized men.

A few of this little band claim our notice, the St. Kenelms in particular, of whom there were but two — brother and sister. They were orphans.

Albert St. Kenelm was about eight-and-twenty years of age. He was a noble specimen of physical manhood, and the pleasant, unobtrusive air of a born gentleman. He had been reared in opulence, possessed a good education, and had never known a want that money could supply, until the doom of slavery fell upon their land. However, he was not one of those whose haughty pride and arrogance were characteristics of some of the old families of the South. He was kind, generous and polite. He had been a soldier — fought for his cause in the Confederate army. He enlisted as a private; was disbanded a major.

Octavia St. Kenelm was the opposite of her noble, handsome brother in many respects. She was not over seventeen years of age — a little fairy-like creature, whose dark, dreamy eyes, full of the spirit of mischief, olive complexion, fair face, and wealth of black, silken hair, gave her that rare type of beauty that belongs to Castilian blood.

She was dressed in a traveling-suit that well became her beauty; and during the long journey she had contributed much, by her vivacity of spirit, to the pleasure and enjoyment of the party. Her coming was like a burst of sunshine. She was kind-hearted and generous, like her brother, yet full of innocent mischief and girlish pranks. She was a splendid equestrienne, fearless and daring, often risking dangers from which the more cautious would have shrunk with fear. She was not without her faults, however. Womanlike, she would have her own way. In this she had been encouraged from a little child by old Aunt Shady, the negro, who had been a mother to her for years. She could deny the child nothing, and now the woman would not be denied.

Octavia was entirely heart-free. She bestowed her love upon none but her brother and Aunt Shady; although many were the youths that had worshipped at the shrine of her beauty.

The Boswell family consisted of six persons — father, mother, and four children. Two of the latter, a boy and girl, had grown to man and womanhood.

Richard Boswell was a thorough "westerner," and a fine specimen of manhood. He had fought in the Northern army against his young friend, St. Kenelm; but, now that the war was ended, they laid aside all party and political differences and renewed their old-time friendship.

Maggie Boswell, Richard's sister, was a sweet,



He held a bugle to his lips, ever and anon sending forth a shrill blast upon it.

modest girl of eighteen, with brown eyes and brown hair, a bright, pleasant and open countenance, a clear, musical voice, and a graceful, sylph-like form. She was the bosom friend of Octavia, and like her in one particular, was full of joy and merriment, but unlike her in another, she loved and was loved. To Albert St. Kenelm had Maggie plighted her heart and hand, though not one of the whole party knew aught of their engagement.

The Gilbrest family was composed of five persons, but with them we have nothing in particular to do at present.

Among the blacks that made up the rest of the party, was old Aunt Shady, the negroess who had been in the St. Kenelm family many years. She was over fifty years of age, yet strong and robust. A more kind-hearted, honest and faithful creature could not be found, and to Albert and Octavia St. Kenelm had she proven herself a devoted friend and servant.

The party was well armed with repeating rifles of the latest pattern, besides being provided with other implements of war that few emigrants took the precaution or trouble to bring along with them. Fully aware of the dangers that beset their path, they acted upon the principle, that to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Far in advance of the train, the mountains loomed up against the sky like a cloud-bank. Beyond this range was the shrine of their pilgrimage.

As they neared the village of Conejos, the spirits of all began to revive. A hard day's journeying beneath the hot sun and over dry, dusty roads, had quite fatigued both man and beast; but at Conejos they had arranged to stop for a week or so to rest and recuperate before undertaking the journey through the mountains.

The little village of adobes was about five miles away, yet it did not seem to be over half that distance to the travelers. And so Octavia St. Kenelm, fired with her usual spirit of mischief and woman-curiosity, resolved, to precede the train into the dull little village, which she declared was sound asleep, at the foot of the mountain.

She fell behind and ordered Jupiter, one of the black servants, to saddle up her pony, a spirited mustang that she had purchased of the Indians with some jewelry. Jupiter, like the rest of the men, was only too eager to obey the mandates of the bright-eyed girl, and at once proceeded to saddle the pony. In a few minutes more Octavia was mounted and galloping past the wagons toward Conejos, her fair face flushed with merriment, while pleasant words and musical peals of laughter burst from her lips as she swept past each tilted vehicle.

In the foremost wagon was old Aunt Shady, and Octavia wondered if she could get past without the old woman seeing her. But she did not. Aunt Shady was on the look-out, and as the maiden approached one edge of the can-

vas tilt was suddenly raised, and a round, black face, set in a frame of white woolly hair, peered out.

It was a good-natured looking face, with its big white eyes and double row of pearl teeth, yet it assumed a look of blank astonishment and injured confidence, when Octavia was discovered.

"Bress my soul!" came in measured accents from the old negress lips.

"Why, Aunt Shady, what's the matter?" asked the mischievous little Octavia, in feigned surprise, as she drew rein alongside of the wagon.

"I is completely 'stonished, I is."

"Indeed, Aunt Shady?"

"Yes, indeed. Whar under de sun an' shinin' stars are you jist gwine now, Octaby?"

"Going on to Conejos to wake up the citizens and tell them we are coming," was Octavia's reply, spoken with an air of feigned innocence.

"Heavenly Fadder, chile! is you jis' gwine crazy? It arn't de middle ob de arfternoon yet, and de people ob Conejos arn't asleep yet, chile, ob course day isn't."

A merry peal of laughter was Octavia's only response. She gave her pony the reins, and waving her little brown hand to Aunt Shady, galloped away.

The old negroess dropped the tilt, straightened up and burst into a fit of hearty laughter that shook her fat sides, until the whole wagon

seemed to become inspired and began to shake too.

"I's proud ob dat chile, I is," she finally said to herself, yet aloud. Then as her face assumed an expression of that mild, motherly indignation, she continued: "but, she'll jis' brake my ole heart, she will, ef she don't mind what I says. She jist alers would hab her own way; and when I says: 'Octaby, no; Octaby, don't, out will come dat witchin' little laff, and right down into ole Shady's heart will go dem bright eyes, and to save my soul all I can say is to laff and laff and laff, and when I's done laffin' Octaby's gone."

CHAPTER II.

OCTAVIA'S CAVALIER.

OCTAVIA cantered leisurely along the dim road leading toward Conejos, her young mind free of all but pleasant, girlish thoughts, her young heart untrammelled by the cares and vexations of life.

The road ran along the creek, winding in and out of little mottes of timber, and twisting around the bluffs.

The plain had appeared perfectly level all the way to the village; but, to Octavia's surprise, she found it a continuation of gentle swells, and now and then quite a hill. Without halting, however, she galloped on down the valley. The train was hidden from her view now by a point of land projecting into the valley. Before her, a swell in the plain shut out Conejos from her view. To her left was a clump of stunted pines, from the shadows of which a horseman suddenly appeared at a sweeping gallop. He was headed down the valley, coming directly toward her.

For once Octavia felt an involuntary fear steal over her, for she knew not what danger threatened. As the horseman drew nearer, however, she saw that he was a white man, and her fears, in a measure, subsided.

Reaching the road, the man wheeled his horse into the wagon-track and rode up alongside of the maiden. Lifting his hat, he bowed politely, at the same time saying, in pure English:

"Pardon my intrusion, señorita."

Octavia glanced up at the stranger, whose voice was soft and musical almost as that of a Moorish maid. The next moment a flush suffused her pretty face. Her heart gave a great throb, sending the life-current leaping through her veins. Her eyes were downcast with a childlike embarrassment.

She had been completely surprised. With her sudden fears was associated the face of a rough-bearded man, but the face was that of a boy. The youth could not have been over eighteen years of age, and yet his form was developed into perfect manhood, and his face, although smooth as a maiden's, wore an open, manly look. His eyes were of a dark blue, soft in expression, large and lustrous. Yet there was that in their depths that denoted the courage of a lion, the gentleness of a child; the fierceness of the hawk, the mildness of the dove — a deadly foe, a devoted friend. His features were of a type more remarkable for the strength of character they indicated than for mere beauty.

He was dressed in a style becoming his age and personal appearance. On his head he wore a Mexican sombrero banded with gold. A serape of fine texture and of a purple hue, was thrown over his shoulders and fastened together at the throat with a jeweled clasp. This concealed most of his garb, but a breeze drifting up the valley, threw back the edge of the shawl, revealing a dress of the finest texture, and made after the style of a ranchero's, the whole fairly dazzling the eyes of Octavia.

The maiden beheld her ideal of perfect manhood in this dashing young stranger, and in unconscious admiration could but gaze upon his handsome face and form. Nor was this admiration without a response, for his very soul seemed exalted by the glance of her dark eyes and the soft music of her voice.

She politely bowed her acceptance of his apology for his intrusion upon her solitude, though a slight tremor in her voice betrayed her inward emotions.

"You ride alone, señorita."

"I did," she replied, with a faint smile; and then, as her womanly curiosity began to assert itself, she asked a question also:

"Do you go to Conejos?" and she touched her pony with the whip to quiet its fears of the prancing horse the youth bestrode.

"I go only to the cross-roads leading to Loma," the boy replied; "then you reside at Conejos?"

"No, sir; I belong to an emigrant train that is coming a short way behind."

"Oh, indeed!" he exclaimed; "have you traveled far?"

"From the Missouri river."

"You are risking many dangers in passing through this country. The Arapahoes and Cheyennes are continually roving about over these plains in search of some one to murder, and if they don't find whites, they'll turn in and murder one another. Moreover, the white outlaws under the notorious Red Rob keep the whole country, from the head-waters of the Rio Grande to Santa Fe, in a fever of excitement."

"We have been frequently warned of that robber band, but as we have nothing of value in our train, that robbers are likely to want, we have no fears."

"I beg to differ with you, my fair friend," the youth replied; "there is that in your train which would be of precious value to a robber or a Christian."

Octavia reflected. She wondered what he had reference to; moreover, how he knew they had anything at all.

"I am sure I know of nothing, unless it is our jaded mules, which we propose to give a week's rest at Conejos."

"It is not your animals, señorita; it is yours."

Octavia started, and grew red and white by turns. Such a thought had never occurred to her young mind before; and it struck her so suddenly now that a vague fear, such as she had never experienced, stole upon her. She involuntarily glanced back to see how far her friends were away. But they were not yet in sight—Conejos was still hidden from her view, and a sense of her helplessness, in case of danger, made the presence of the young cavalier quite agreeable. But, whatever pleasure or security she felt in his companionship, she was soon compelled to forego it, for, reaching the cross-roads leading to Loma, the youth drew rein, saying:

"Here I leave you, señorita. May you have a pleasant sojourn at Conejos."

"Thank you, sir," Octavia replied, her eyes sparkling; "but to whom am I indebted for this kind wish?"

The youth appeared not to hear her question, but lifting his sombrero, and waving her an adieu, he turned his horse's head toward Loma, and galloped away at a furious speed.

Octavia, who had drawn rein, sat motionless and watched the retreating form in a kind of mental abstraction. A feeling of disquiet or apprehension stole over her young heart, and with it soon came a vague loneliness that seemed to increase with the distance that was momentarily separating her further and further from the handsome, unknown boy.

Forgetful of what she was doing, she continued to gaze after the youth, who, gaining the summit of the ridge, turned in his saddle, and, waving his hand to her, disappeared beyond the hill.

Octavia's heart gave a great bound, for with that act a delicious pleasure filled her breast and banished her unrest. Turning her pony's head, she rode rapidly back toward the train, to inquire into the non appearance of her friends around the hill. They had had plenty time in which to make the distance, and she was surprised at their delay. As she rode along, a fearful sound suddenly smote upon her ears. It came from the direction of the train. It was the report of firearms, mingled with yells and shouts. These were succeeded by a thunderous boom that came crashing forth upon the air with more violence than a thunderbolt from heaven. The earth seemed to rock as the waves of the terrific sound rolled along the surface and swelled upon the air, starting a hundred echoes far and near.

"Oh, mercy!" cried Octavia, "that was the cannon; the train has been attacked by Indians or robbers!"

She urged her pony forward.

The prolonged twang of a horn suddenly pealed forth upon the air.

The maiden glanced up the valley toward the north, and to her surprise beheld her late young cavalier galloping along the ridge in the direction of the train. He held a bugle to his lips, ever and anon sending forth a shrill blast upon it.

And still another surprise awaited her.

A band of horsemen burst suddenly from the little grove of pines, out of which the youth had emerged but a few minutes previous. All were armed, for she could see their weapons gleaming in the sunlight.

At a wild, breakneck speed they thundered across the valley and swept up the hill toward that mysterious young knight of the plain.

"Thank God!" burst in accents of joy from Octavia's lips; "they are rangers—they are going to help my friends—and he is their leader!"

CHAPTER III.

THE SOLDIERS' BIVOTAC.

NORTHERN New Mexico!
To this land of Aztec ruins, deserted Zuni cities, perched upon lofty summits amid the purple clouds; to this land of ancient volcanoes, of hidden rivers, of yawning chasms and grim, savage forests; to this mysterious land, whose history is written only in cipher, where once burned the fires of the Sunworshippers, we would now lead the gentle reader.

Under the somber shadows of a pinon forest, in the fertile valley of the San Juan, four men reposed in their bivouac. They were soldiers of the United States, as their uniforms denoted, and belonged to the garrison at Fort Defiance, in Arizona.

The day was nearly spent. The wind drifted down from the cool heights of the distant mountains, and rumbled chill and sullen through the rifts and gorges of the adjacent foothills. Strange voices whispered in still stranger tones among the somber pinons. Buzzards wheeled in the air above the camp with their naked, coral necks outstretched and greedy eyes looking to earth as if in anticipation of an early feast. Coyotes howled in the distance.

The location and its surroundings were well calculated to inspire the deepest melancholy and gloomiest forebodings. And perhaps they did, but not one of that little band of veterans admitted it by word or look. Reclining in positions of ease and repose upon their waterproof blankets, that had come from Navajo looms, they smoked their pipes and conversed with the ease and composure of men accustomed to camp-life.

This little party was under command of James H. Miller, the Indian agent of the Navajos; and the object which had brought them into the San Juan valley was for furthering the humanitarian Indian policy, of which Mr. Miller was an earnest advocate. The annuities from the Government to the Navajos had been exhausted, and for two years in succession the crops of the semi-barbarous agriculturists had failed. Thus, on the verge of starvation and confined to their reservation, the Indians were on the eve of open hostilities. It required every effort of the agent to prevent it, and in hopes of finding a district more suitable for a reservation and agricultural pur-

poses, he had penetrated into the valley of the San Juan, accompanied by three companions; and it is thus that we find them encamped in that valley, not far from the *Rio del los Pinos*.

"I feel thankful to heaven," Mr. Miller finally remarked, starting from his silent thoughts, "that this expedition was undertaken."

"You think then this valley is sufficiently fertile for the maintenance of the tribe, do you?" asked Ben Thomas.

"I do. Water in this arid, volcanic land is the greatest consideration, and the San Juan and its series of tributaries will furnish this in abundance for irrigation."

"But it seems that rivers in this country go dry or sink beneath the earth's surface, and the San Juan may also disappear."

"I think it has been dry at some remote period of the past," said Jesus Alviso, the Mexican interpreter.

"What proof have you of this, Alviso?" asked the Indian agent.

"The deserted pueblos and ruined *acequias*, señor."

"I cannot think so, Alviso. The formation of this valley leads me to a different opinion."

"Then why was this valley deserted? We have ample evidence of its having once been densely populated."

"I know it, and cannot account for its desolation upon any other theory than that the Apaches, those ancient foes of the Navajos, overran the valley at some remote period of the past. This country is an enigma to the antiquarian. It has been the scene of local strife and bloodshed ever since the Spanish invaders endeavored to supplant the old Mexican faith. The wrath of God seems to have fallen upon this country. It is the Egypt of the New World, for the 'Seven cities of the Cibolas,' on the de Chaco river, and the fortified city of the Aztecs, Quivira, on the San Juan, answer to the once populous cities of Babylon and Nineveh. We have evidence of a superior race of people having once dwelt here. Their ruined cities attest this. But now it has become almost a desert."

The youth appeared not to hear her question, but lifting his sombrero, and waving her an adieu, he turned his horse's head toward Loma, and galloped away at a furious speed.

Octavia, who had drawn rein, sat motionless and watched the retreating form in a kind of mental abstraction. A feeling of disquiet or apprehension stole over her young heart, and with it soon came a vague loneliness that seemed to increase with the distance that was momentarily separating her further and further from the handsome, unknown boy.

Forgetful of what she was doing, she continued to gaze after the youth, who, gaining the summit of the ridge, turned in his saddle, and, waving his hand to her, disappeared beyond the hill.

"In which case troubles will multiply," said Ben Thomas. "With the Mexican outlaws to the south of us, the Utes and Mormons on the west, and a horde of lawless treasure-seekers pouring in from all quarters of the globe, what will be the result?"

"War, robbery and crime," responded Alviso.

"I apprehend no trouble from the Utes," said Ben Thomas.

"Do not trust them, señor. They appear friendly, but even at this moment they may be in this valley."

The man's words seemed prophetic.

"Well," said Mr. Miller, starting to his feet, "I must not neglect the view from the summit of yonder cliff."

He took a small field-glass from among his effects, and, accompanied by Alviso, started toward the hill, across a beautiful valley. The pinons swayed gently above them, the green grass rustled to their hasty footsteps. Soon they reached the foot of the bluff—a spur of the San Juan mountain—and with light foot-steps started up the steep acclivity. The earth seemed to rock as the waves of the terrific sound rolled along the surface and swelled upon the air, starting a hundred echoes far and near.

"Oh, mercy!" cried Octavia, "that was the cannon; the train has been attacked by Indians or robbers!"

She urged her pony forward.

The prolonged twang of a horn suddenly pealed forth upon the air.

The sun was just sinking behind a distant range of hills. The mountain tops around them seemed ablaze with fire—altars upon which burned the eternal fires of the Montezumas. The valley and forest lay brooding in death-like shadows beneath them.

With his glass the agent swept the surrounding hills, valleys and mountains. Far away upon a lofty summit to the westward he described the gray outlines of one of those ancient ruined cities. It loomed up against the sky grim and ghostly.

For a moment Miller studied the old remains with meditative silence; then he turned his glass upon another object to which his attention had been called by his companion. He scanned it for a moment, then exclaimed:

"That beats me, Alviso."

It was a smoke, curling upward in a spiral column in the vicinity of the ruins of Quivira.

"That proves that we are not the only persons in this vicinity."

"To be sure it does, señor," replied Alviso.

"Do you think it is from an Indian camp?"

"No; it's too bold for that. I'll tell you my opinion, señor."

"Well?"

"You remember of hearing of a party of emigrants that passed through Santa Fe, about two years ago?"

"Yes; they say they acted queer. They were called Silent Tongues on account of their reticence as to their destination. All at once they disappeared. Their wagons were tracked to the old Moqui towns, where all traces of them vanished."

"That's the story, señor; and now—"

"Well?"

"I risk a doubleton on that smoke curling up from the retreat of the Silent Tongues."

"We'll see to-morrow," said Miller, and turning he led the way down the cliff and back to camp through the gathering shadows of twilight.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THREE MINERS.

WHEN Miller and his companion reached camp they found their comrades and supper awaiting them.

Seating themselves upon the sward the four began their repast. While thus engaged, the agent made known his discovery, and commented upon the same.

The sound of horses' hoofs and the jingle of trappings suddenly arrested their attention. Mechanically they drew their revolvers as they started and gazed uneasily around.

Three horsemen emerged from the shadows of the woods and drew rein.

One, familiar with a mining district would at once have pronounced the trio a party of miners. They were mounted on strong-limbed, yet jaded-looking ponies; and were provided with huge packs, from which protruded the handles of picks and spades and other evidences of their being treasure-hunters on a prospecting tour through the country. They were also well armed. Coming from the direction Quivira ruins, there was nothing in their looks to engender distrust in the minds of the soldiers. Though rudely dressed, the open, frank expression in each face dispelled all apprehension.

Their coming broke the savage monotony of the camp, and the quartette hailed their presence with a feeling akin to pleasure.

These three men were entirely different so far as age and personal appearances went. The eldest must have been fifty years or more of age. He was a tall, powerful man, straight and erect, with a proud, martial bearing. His

features wore a pleasant, yet stern and resolute expression that was indicative of great decision of character. His eyes were of a dark gray, with that peculiarity of expression in them that one often sees in those of a docile lion. His face was covered with a ponderous white beard that gave him a still more venerable and imposing look.

This man was Basil Walramond.

The next man in point of years was Nathan Wolfe. He was about forty years of age, and was a splendid specimen of the physical man, with a rough, bearded face, upon whose features dropped out the predominant traits of his personal character.

"I think then this valley is sufficiently fertile for the maintenance of the tribe, do you?" asked Ben Thomas.

"I do. Water in this arid, volcanic land is the greatest consideration, and the San Juan and its series of tributaries will furnish this in abundance for irrigation."

The third was a young man of perhaps five-and-twenty years. A little above the medium height, he was possessed of the form of an athlete and the face of an Adonis. His hair, which was of a dark-brown color, was cropped closely to his head. A heavy mustache, of the same color as his hair, shaded an expressive mouth, and lent an additional look of strength to his features and of firmness to his character. In his dark-blue eyes burned the luster of health, the fire of impetuous youth and the spirit of adventure. His cheeks were bronzed, yet this rather served to strengthen his manly beauty. His voice was clear and full—almost musical.

This was Asa Sheridan.

All three were dressed in buck-skin with woolen undershirts. All wore heavy boots with jingling spurs at the heels. Bread-brimmed hats covered each head. A leather belt encircled each waist, and in this belt were a pair of revolvers and a murderous-looking knife. A handsome rifle was swung at the back of each, by means of a strap passing over the left shoulder and under the right arm.

At present these three were strangers. By chance they had been thrown together at Santa Fe. Their acquaintance ripened into mutual friendship, and then their friendship developed itself into a spirit of adventure. This finally carried them on a prospecting tour into northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

The profession and character of each before their meeting at Santa Fe seemed of little concern to the others, for they made no inquiry of one and another of anything extending beyond their first meeting. They asked for no papers of recommendation, of moral character or social standing. On the border all kinds of characters meet—good, bad and indifferent—many of them to begin life anew; and so the past is usually considered beyond the beginning, as it were, and to ask a man for a history of himself would be almost as absurd as to ask a child for its history before it existed.

The three were friends that was certain. They were true to each other; that had been tested in more than one difficulty with the Arapahoes and Apaches.

A military camp, by Jove!" cried young Sheridan, as he caught sight of the soldiers' uniform in the dim glow of the camp-fire, and reined in his horse within a rod of the camp.

"Yes, on a small scale," replied Miller, advancing.

Sheridan dismounted and saluted his companions following his example.

"From Fort Wingate or Defiance?"

"Defiance," responded Miller. "Judging from appearances you are miners, and as it is camping time, I would just say that the hospitality of the San Juan valley and our bivouac is at your service."

"Thank you, sir," said the old man, in a bluff, yet kindly tone.

It required but a few minutes to unpack their animals and lead them out to grass along with the soldiers' horses.

This done, the three new-comers brought out their supply of dried venison, roasted bear-meat and hard biscuit, and took supper along with their newly-made acquaintances.

"It is a blessed relief," said Basil Walramond, "to meet white men with white hearts in this country. What are you doing here, anyhow, soldiers?"

"Looking up a new agency for the Navajos," replied Miller; "and you—"

"We are hunting gold and silver and diamonds," interrupted the mysterious old man of stone, anticipating Miller's question.

"With what success, señor?" asked Alviso.

The old man beat his fierce look upon Alviso, and his immobile face seemed to wear a faint smile of scorn.

"I'd be a fool to tell you," he responded; then his voice softened, and he continued: "but you are soldiers. You have no time to hunt treasure, so we need have no fears of you jumping our claims. The fact of it is, however, we have found no gold, no silver, no diamonds; but we have found rubies, turquoises and garnets of great value. But you needn't murder us for them, for they are cached a hundred miles from here," and the speaker broke off into a fit of silent, good-natured laughter.

"Did you come from the direction of Quivira ruins?" Mr. Miller asked.

"Not far in that direction. We've just returned from Colorado. We saw your smoke, and beat our course this way. We go to the ruins to-morrow," replied the old man.

"I saw a smoke in the direction of the ruins a few minutes ago. There must be a settlement down there, or else—"

"Do you think so, commandant?" asked Walramond, betraying some sudden emotion.

"It may be a party of hunters

Swiss, as he watched his enemy growing weaker and weaker, from pure exhaustion. At last Don Lorenzo paused and leaned on his sword, and Bonetta spoke:

"Now, Don Lorenzo Bellario, you are at my mercy. Now confess your treason and you shall receive your life. Confess that you put the accusation against me in the Lion's Mouth, or die!"

Bellario was trembling all over with weakness, but he straightened up once more, and faintly raised his sword.

"Kill me, signor," he muttered hoarsely. "I know nothing of your accusation. Kill me, but do not dishonor me."

Bonetta ground his teeth with a furious curse.

"Then die in your falsehood!" he shouted, and made his last fierce lunge, that beat aside the Spaniard's guard and pierced deep into his body.

Don Lorenzo sank slowly back on the sand, his sword falling from his nerveless hand, while his face looked up, proud and defiant to the last.

Hardly had he done so, when, with a wild, despairing shriek, the disguised page ran forward and threw herself on his body, crying:

"Lorenzo! Lorenzo! My love, my life! He has killed him!"

Then there was a sensation among the Genoese officers.

At the sound of that shriek Bonetta dropped his sword, stared at the golden curls as if thunderstruck, and ejaculated:

"The princess Julia! Holy Mother of Heaven! The villain has bewitched her, too!"

And a frown of intense pain and hatred crossed his iron features, as he gazed at his fallen foe, beautiful as ever amid all his blood, and heard the frantic girl calling on him to speak to her only one word, while she kissed the pale lips from which no answer came.

The other officers hung around, helpless and sympathetic, not knowing what to do, and Don Lorenzo lay slowly breathing away his life in the arms of Julia, when the sound of voices close by aroused everybody to the fact of strangers being present.

A brilliant crowd of cavaliers and nobles came trooping into the little arena, and within ten feet of Bonetta, with eyes distended with horror, stood Estella, the Countess Milleron.

The courtaisees of the Swiss halberdiers of the guard were behind and around her, and on her right hand was an old noble in robes of black velvet, furred with sable, who was crowned with the ermine cap of a senator of the Republic of Venice.

Bonetta stood gazing blankly before him at the Countess. He had no eyes for any one else.

She, on her part, looked at him with amazement and terror. There was no mistake with her. The suddenly gray hair and the thin face could not hide her over from Estella Milleron. She knew him in an instant. But as she glanced from him to the pale, bleeding figure of Don Lorenzo, a look of fear and aversion gathered on her face, and she turned away with a shudder.

A keen spasm of pain crossed Bonetta's countenance when he beheld that look. And then the old senator advanced and addressed him:

"You are Antonio Bonetta, formerly captain in the service of Venice," he said, more affirmatively than inquiringly.

"I am Antonio Count Bonetta, in the service of Genoa," admitted the other, proudly.

"You were in the service of Venice," continued the senator, sternly. "Where is your discharge?"

"I have none," replied Bonetta. "I am a free Swiss and need none."

The senator turned and made a signal to the halberdiers behind. An officer advanced and laid his hand on Bonetta's shoulder.

"You are my prisoner, captain," he announced, stiffly.

Bonetta bowed, and quietly took his clothes from the hands of his captors, as he protested: "I yield to force, but the Eagle of Genoa shall yet teach the Lion of St. Mark to respect her servants."

The senator made a mute sign, and a guard of halberdiers surrounded the Genoese officers, who could not have resisted had they wished. But they followed the example of their leader, and submitted in silence.

Then the old noble pointed to Don Lorenzo, and to the disguised page, who lay with her face hidden under her long curly hair, quite mute since the advent of this crowd.

"Take up yonder boy," he ordered, sternly. "Guard the young viper well. He has murdered the princess Julia Dandolo. If the man is alive, bring him along to the boats, and then follow."

A stiff looking Swiss marched forward, seized the seeming boy by the arm, and jerked him roughly to his feet. As he did so, and the false page's face was turned round to view, deathly pale, framed in golden ringlets, Estella sprung forward with a scream of recognition. "Madonna mia!" she cried. "Count Faliero, it is Julia herself!"

The old count was completely taken aback. He rubbed his eyes, looked at the half fainting princess, whom he instantly recognized, and for a moment was at fault. But his Italian subtlety at once conceived two things—a mystery to be solved, a scandal to be hushed up.

"Take care of her, Madonna," he whispered to Estella. "This must be settled in secret council."

Then aloud:

"Halberdiers, put yon wounded man in a litter, and bring him after us. When we reach the city, keep back the people, and take him round by the private entrance of the palace. Come, my lord count."

He bowed to Bonetta with formal politeness. The affair had assumed a different aspect since the mixing up of so high a family.

In ten minutes more five gondolas were bearing back the party to Venice, three of which had followed the boat of Bonetta in the wake of that mysterious boat that had excited the curiosity of the Genoese steersman.

To be continued—commenced in No. 260.

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BY GEO. L. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "A LIVING LIE," "SNARED TO DEATH," "BERNAL CLYDE," "ELMA'S CAPTIVITY," "STELLA, A STAR."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SCHEME MARRED.

"LEAVE my office, or I will call the police!" sputtered the doctor.

The keen eyes of Frank Ray saw that he was frightened, though he put on an assumption of courage.

"Call away, and you'll be tooted to Ludlow street jail in a jiffy," answered the detective.

"We'll search your apartments and see what we can find."

The doctor backed up against the door leading to an inner apartment in a suspicious manner. This movement was not lost upon Frank Ray.

"Oh! you've got her in there, have you?" he asked the doctor, in a kind of growl.

Frank Ray caught him by the collar and swung him around from the door with the greatest ease.

"Stand out of my way if you don't want to get hurt," he cried.

The doctor showed his yellow teeth like a fished hyena, but he did not offer any further resistance, evidently satisfied of its uselessness.

"There's a lady patient there, who was brought to me last night," he said, remonstrating. "She is suffering from an attack of catalepsy."

Frank Ray laughed scornfully.

"You'll suffer from an attack of catalepsy one of these days," he returned. "You will have a suppression of motion when you come to be hung up with a rope around your neck!"

The doctor showed his teeth again in a manner that indicated he was not pleased with the allusion.

Frank Ray opened the door, which led into a little dark bedroom. The opening of the door, however, threw considerable light with it and revealed a female form extended upon the bed.

"Here she is!" he cried.

"My child! Etta!" exclaimed Peter Shaw, seeing the pale face, about which the golden hair hung disorderly.

He sprang into the room. Chester Starke also approached the door attracted by a strong curiosity.

"She was brought here last night by strangers to me," said the doctor. "I know nothing about her."

"Tell that to the marines!" answered Ray.

"She is senseless—she scarcely seems to breathe!" exclaimed Peter Shaw, apprehensively, from within.

"Then he's chloroformed her again this morning," said Ray. He turned fiercely upon the doctor, adding: "I have a great mind to put a bullet through your ugly carcass! And I would, too, only I don't wish to cheat the hangman of his due."

The doctor retreated in alarm.

"How shall we take her away?" asked Peter Shaw, perplexedly.

"Will that not attract a crowd?"

"Hardly, in so short a distance. I'll risk it. Gather up her clothes; I see them on a chair. She was brought here in the same fashion that we must take her away."

"Do you intend to make any charge against me?" asked the doctor, anxiously. "The young lady has not received any injury since she has been here—and it was not my doing, her coming here."

"Umph! do you think us fools to believe that?" returned Ray.

"You can't prove anything against me," insisted the doctor.

"Perhaps not," answered Ray, who had his motives for lulling the doctor into a sense of security.

"Don't take away my revolver—I am offering no resistance," urged the doctor.

"Shall I give it to him?" asked Chester, and he looked reluctant to do so.

"Give it to me."

Ray took the revolver, sprung back the handle and removed the cartridges.

"There," he said, and gave the doctor the unloaded weapon. "You're not the kind of man I would like to trust. But mind, no tricks, or you'll suffer. When will the girl awake?"

"In two hours," answered the doctor, submissively. "But how did you discover that she was here?" he added, with a curiosity that he could not control.

"Never you mind; that's our affair," returned Ray, shortly. Then he called out to Peter Shaw: "Are you ready, sir?"

"Yes."

"Very good! Let me have her."

Ray entered the chamber and returned with Etta, closely wrapped in the counterpane, in his arms.

"I will cover this over her face when we reach the street," he said, "and walk fast. People mind their own business pretty well in New York, and I don't think anybody will trouble me. At all events, I shall not stop to answer any questions. Come."

Ray bore the insensible form of Etta swiftly into the street, and Peter Shaw and Chester followed him.

The people they met on the sidewalk stared surprisedly at Ray and the strange burden he bore, but they could not exactly determine whether he was carrying a sick person or a dead body, but they knew he had a human shape in his arms; the counterpane could not conceal that.

Several turned and followed them. Ray reached the door of the house in which Etta lived and went swiftly up the stairs. Peter Shaw followed him; but Chester Starke paused and confronted the little crowd that had gathered at the door. He thought he might satisfy them and send them away.

A string of questions burst upon him at once.

"What's the matter? Anybody killed somebody run over? Another murder! Drunk, I guess? Is it a boy, or what?"

The old man's daughter was taken very sick at the doctor's, and he had to get a friend to bring her home! replied Chester.

"Oh! Is that all?"

The crowd dispersed in a manner that indicated they thought they had wasted their time, and Chester, smiling to himself, walked upstairs.

"Here she is!" said Ray, bearing Etta through the door that Kate held open for him.

"Did you know we were coming?"

"Lord, yes, I've had my head out of the front window ever since you've been gone," answered Kate. "I saw you when you came out of the doctor's house. Bless her dear heart! here she is again." She bustled about and placed the rocking-chair for him so he could deposit his burden in it. "Why, she's asleep, and oh! how awful pale she is. Oh, she isn't dead, is she?" she added, sinking her voice to a soared whisper.

"No, no, she is still under the influence of the chloroform—she'll come to presently."

"She does look deathly," said Peter Shaw, as he joined them.

"She looks like a sleeping angel!" exclaimed Ray, fervently.

"Oh, Lord! now he's smitten with her," murmured Kate, despondently. "There'll never be any chance for me until she's married off!"

Chester Starke now came in and closed the door after him.

"There she is, Chester; what do you think of her?" asked Peter Shaw.

Chester gazed earnestly in the pale face, framed by the masses of golden hair, and Kate watched him eagerly.

"If the eyes were only open I could tell better," he answered, somewhat evasively; "but I think she is a very charming young lady."

"Ah, yes, he's fixed, too," murmured Kate.

"I never did see the like! Old and young, they're all alike! They've only to set their eyes on her to fall in love with her."

Kate was right. Though it has been said that "a face with the eyes shut is like a house without windows," yet Chester saw enough in that face, even with its closed lids, to convince him that it was the face of all others that he could love.

He felt that his destiny would henceforth rest with her.

Leaving the rescued Etta to the care of her friends, and she was fortunate in having so many and such strong ones, we will return to Doctor Watervliet's office.

That skillful, but unprincipled practitioner, was deeply chagrined at what had taken place. He knew that Edgar Skelmersdale and Cebara Selkreg would be very angry with him. But he shrugged his shoulders as he consoled himself with the reflection that it could not be charged to any fault of his.

He had been taken utterly by surprise, and mortal man could not have withstood the odds against him.

He anxiously awaited their coming, and momentarily expected them, for they had arranged to come in a carriage, and convey Etta to a house in the outskirts of the city, Selkreg providing it, where she could be kept in close captivity until her marriage with Edgar Skelmersdale could be consummated.

The scheme was well arranged, as all their schemes were—but what scheme was ever yet proof against accident?

When the doctor heard a carriage roll up to the door and stop, he knew that they had come. He smiled grimly, despite his own anxiety, in anticipation of the bitter disappointment that awaited them.

"What can they do about it?" he asked him self, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"It was in for a bad landing," said the doctor.

"Well, how is our fair patient?" he cried, gayly.

"Not yet," answered the doctor. "I applied the chloroform again to keep her insensible."

"Good. Well, we may as well take her away. I've got the house all ready for her reception. Edgar, you'll have to put her in the carriage—you are stronger than I am."

When the doctor heard a carriage roll up to the door and stop, he knew that they had come. He smiled grimly, despite his own anxiety, in anticipation of the bitter disappointment that awaited them.

"To kill them both?" answered Edgar, savagely. "I'll have vengeance, if I can have nothing else."

"Hum! Don't take too much risk. You may rest assured that he'll look sharp after us now; and he's not the man to be trifled with."

"You are right," said Doctor Watervliet.

"The first thing to be done is to look to our own safety. I shall pack up and move this afternoon. The lodge-room must be given up."</p

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The Arm-Chair.

A YOUNG man, writing us from Auburn, expresses impatience with those who are impatient with him for "wanting to get along faster in the world than his father before him." His idea seems to be that it is regarded a crime for a young man to want to excel his father in "getting along"—in which idea he is no nearer correct than to assume that the father is invidious of the son's success.

The father is not only not averse to the son's "getting along," but sacrifices, labors, hopes, prays, to accomplish something for his son; and we believe that to these endeavors in his behalf by others is due the exaggerated or over-eager desire of the son to at once jump into a fortune, or to a place of profit and honor that it has cost years of endeavor and struggle for others to attain.

The young man of to-day is not averse to work, but he is averse to time. To acquire a competency, or a good paying business, he thinks ten years a weary probation, and therefore plunges with a kind of frenzy into trade, or a profession, or adventure, in order to reach the required result in half the time which it took his father to get established.

This zeal, in nine cases out of ten, wastes energies, incurs dangerous hazards, and ends in disappointment. It is the wrong spirit to carry into business. The right spirit is that calm determination to succeed, which is quite satisfied both to labor and to wait—to be contented with slow progress—to be undismayed by difficulties, and that looks forward to the future, not with impatience, but with patience and trust.

The men around us best tell the story of the treasure-seekers. Who are the "kings of business?" Not they who have leaped into sudden prosperity; not the young men whose fathers started them with a competency. No; the great men of to-day in all avenues of business are those who toiled into their places by the slow steps of men carrying heavy burdens. They learned all they know by that very toil. That toll it was, indeed, which made them masters of the situation; and he who would occupy their seats, when they are gone, must obtain their knowledge and power through the channels of work which their fathers have left open behind them. He who is unwilling to do the inexorable service that success demands as the price of its awards, must be content to let others occupy the front places.

Sunshine Papers.

The Season Poets Sing.

"For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

Yes, Solomon, even so. I endorse your song. We are, indeed, fairly in the midst of the season that poets sing and that painters immortalize, as we are perpetually reminded by everywhere observing men in white caps and daubed clothes swinging brushes, trotting through the streets with paint-pots, or hanging about the highways with ladders.

Thomson—not your milkman, nor the undertaker at the corner; but the poet, who grew tired of this world and left it before you and I were compelled to enter it quite without our inclinations being consulted regarding the matter—pathetically inquired:

"But who can paint
Like Nature?"

As he lived in the first part of the eighteenth century we cannot state but that the painting of nature, which to our advanced eyes is very distressing, was superior to that of art. But in this age, when Nature is very much below par, and artificiality above, I fear poor Thomson's question would only evoke an astonished and pitying stare; especially from the painters themselves, who find in this season that the deluded poet invoked thus:

"Come, gentle Spring! otherworld mildness, come!" the heyday of their prosperity.

And not only do the artisans just mentioned hail Spring with extreme partiality, but the masons, who have the cellar-bottoms to render into terra firma once more, and the broken walls to reset; the learned gentlemen of the bench, who must mend divorced sash-weights, chisel unruled doors, and restore the flooring to the parlors; the plumbers, who rush to the rescue of distressed house-holders undergoing the horror of

"Water, water everywhere,
But not a drop to drink;"

and the paper-hangers, who are in demand to treat capitally what the servants, or boarders, or demoralized water-pipes, or "the family just moved out," have rendered unfit for any other handling.

Then, too, how sensible to the charms of this ideal and poetical season are the happy mortals who vainly offer high cash inducements to the artisans already crowded with orders, and secure a workman for one day to lose him again for five; who live for weeks upon bare floors, inhaling odors of paint and kalsomine; who dare not sleep at night because the carpenter has not repaired the windows, nor the locksmith come to put the door-fastenings in order; who subsist upon slops, and cold victuals, and fever and ague medicine, while they await the time and pleasure of the man who is to put a new range in the kitchen! How they ought to appreciate Thomson, and feel with him that Spring is the season for

"An elegant sufficiency, content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labor, useful life,
Progressive virtue and approving Heaven!"

But we entertain a few harrowing doubts as to whether they do! True, there may be an elegant sufficiency of work to do, and bills to pay, and dirt to combat, and impudent servants to endure; there may be experienced a small amount of contentment; that the fickle atmosphere changes did not carry off the baby with croup or lay up James with the rheumatism; undoubtedly rural quiet would be appre-

ciated; equally undoubtedly, no kind of quiet nor retirement will be found; friendship in the springtide is apt to resemble "The uncertain glory of an April day!" books are to be kept out of sight, labor finds no alternation with ease, while "Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven?" are only thought of when the completion of new suits insures the renewal of responses in the church pew—if then!

For new suits and Spring are inseparable, especially to the feminine portion of humanity. It matters not how many house-cleaning, house-repairing, or removal cares may burden the female world, added thereto must be the fearful responsibility of selecting a new outfit—the weightiest one, indeed, of all! What if the basements and bedrooms are not as clean as the faultlessly-renovated parlors, or the carpets and furniture for those apartments assigned their future places? Society will not censure sharp fine housekeeping if the mistress makes a stylish appearance in the show-rooms of her house. But if she don last year's suit how they will pull her to pieces! They will criticize the length of the skirt, smile at the year-old trimming, and bow very coolly to her because her shoulder-seams are not elongated or curtailed agreeable to the latest regulations. Realizing this, women who do not possess extraordinary strength of character will not allow any trifling duties pertaining to house or family to interfere with the immediate completion of a new costume!

"The winter is past, the rain is over," but oh! Solomon, how about the dust that ruins velvet cloaks, disfigures new silks, plays the mischief with Easter bonnets, and forces poor humanity to swallow twice the traditional quantity of dirt? And how about the fog that prevail when the dust-storms do not, exposing to terrible temptations our Christian graces, and the winds that tan and mottle the faces of the fair? "The flowers appear on the earth," or, as Heber sings, "Spring unlocks the flowers to paint the laughing earth." We know all that, for there never was a would-be poet, or a country newspaper, that has not advertised the blooming of dandelions, and violets, and primroses through ages of successive springs.

But if Heber and all the lesser chaps that spend so much time describing spring flowers had them to buy for their wives', and sisters', and daughters' bonnets, they would not be likely to feel mindful enough to let the earth or any other thing laugh; for though elegant flowers put in an appearance with the coming of spring, elegant prices are demanded for them in return.

"The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Ah! Solomon, in this land and age is a marked improvement upon the days of your song. We have the singing of birds the year round; import them from Europe, you know. As for the voice of the turtle, the mud-turtle, there is not the slightest reason why, with the advent of spring, it should not be heard in our land; for one of the charms of this season of the year is the fording of rivers where we collected streets once to have been, and the carrying of real estate about on our feet and clothes, *nolens volens*.

Coleridge sang that "The Spring comes slowly up this way." Happy Coleridge! If but it would come slowly our way and give us time to spread our discomforts into a solemn procession, instead of burying us under heaped-up misery. But let it come what way it will, it is a fruitful source of conversation. Ordinarily, the weather is considered a *dernier resort*, but at the close of winter, ideas seem suspended, and every one of us atmospheric freaks, solemnly averring there never was such a spring before, and grow so irreverent under the sense of accumulated discomforts, as to feel contempt for poets, and equal to the parading of Pope, to the extent of making him say:

"Death of winter, to mortals direful spring
Of woes unnumbered."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

HINDRANCES.

Is it not a bit singular how common it is to throw cold water on any scheme or plan that promises to be of some benefit to the world? Does it not often appear as though some minds hated any new ideas in others, and would do all in their power to retard one's progress? If Jenny is striving at some invention, which he fondly imagines will be worthy of a patent, how much encouragement do you imagine he gets! Not much! His father complains that he is wasting his time; his mother complains of the clutter he makes on the floor. His relations think it perfectly preposterous that children should have any ideas of what will be of use to the world. They don't want any progress or improvements. They want to keep in the old hackneyed grooves. Because their parents did not want any of these new-fangled notions, neither do they; their parents succeeded in doing without them, and they think they are just as capable of doing the same.

I believe history is quite silent on the subject, but I wouldn't wonder one atom if some of our inventors, who have proved so useful in producing labor-saving machines, had to go without their suppers, and received a sound spank into the bargain, as a reward for showing others the gorn of some invention which has since brought them a fortune.

This striving to keep back genius by the discouraging words of "it will never amount to anything" will never do in the world. It is a heathenish sort of a saying, and unfit to be used in a civilized and Christian community.

Look at the sewing-machine, one of the greatest blessings bestowed upon our sex, and one of the mighty powers of the land. Was that machine introduced without many discouragements? Were there not many good people who imagined it would take away work from the seamstress' hands and render her without being able to earn a livelihood? How contrary the case has proved! It has given more work and better wages to those who were dependent on their needles. Scarcely a home is too poor to live without one; they are deemed a public necessity. A woman can work and accomplish more in a few hours than any one could by the eternal stitch, stitch, stitch by hand in the olden times. I am glad the inventors had "spunk" enough not to listen to the words of discouragement dinned into their ears.

I was reading the other day of a noted individual who thought it an awful thing for a paper to be published more than once a week. This was in those good (?) old times when newspapers were a rarity and innovations frowned upon as though they were some fearful sin. The reason for this person's objection was, he thought a paper would distract too much of one's attention if a newspaper were to appear more than once a week, and would unfit him for the practical duties of his actual life. It is exceedingly laughable to ponder over so weighty an objection. I am afraid such a man would expire in a "confinement"

fit if he lived in these days, when newspapers are issued four and five times a day.

I don't know as "gumption" is a very elegant word to make use of, but I do know that it is a very expressive one, and one that I find quite applicable in describing a certain going-ahead quality of many individuals, who will not allow old-fogeyish ideas to retard their progress; they have "gumption" enough of their own to make headway despite of all barriers. If they know a treasure lies under a stone, they are not going to allow it to remain there because people say the stone is too heavy to be removed. They will find a way to remove the stone, and they ought to be commended for their perseverance, and not have everybody crying in their ears—"It is of no use." You may depend upon it that those who send up such a doleful, dismal wail are useless individuals—useless to themselves and the community at large, and the sooner they are sent to Guineas the better.

There is something for us all to do in this world, something for us all to accomplish, some problem to work out. For such purposes were brains and minds given to us. We were not intended to keep in our beaten track all the time. We were meant to progress. The world moves, and we must move with it. We cannot expect improvements to be made if we throw cold water on all experiments and try to crush them by disheartening words. If we cannot aid, do not let us discourage, if we haven't money to help an inventor, can't we do what we are able, by our influence, to secure for him a hearing with some one who can aid him pecuniarily! I verily believe Heaven smiles on those who encourage others along. Seriously, now, don't you agree with me?

WRONG CONDEMNATION.

ARE we not apt to be too severe upon the wealthy class of individuals, who dwell in this sphere with us who are less prosperous? We style them cold and callous, haughty and proud, niggardly and mean. They may seem so to us, and, in some cases, they may really be so, yet there may be some excuse for all this. Having all they need at their command, how can they be expected to feel for the wants of the poor as do the poor themselves? A man of wealth is obliged, at times, to take to aid with his money, some charitable object, and when at once set him down as mean and stingy. Unless we are possessed of wealth, we do not know of the thousands and tens of thousands of calls the man of means has, daily, upon his purse. Were he to subscribe ever so little to every charity he is requested to aid, he would soon become an object of charity himself. He has officers of benevolent associations tugging at him, beseeching him for money, leeching him, and actually haunting him to so great an extent as to make him believe that money it is, and not the love of it, is the root of all evil.

Perhaps a great number of these men whose names never appear upon the lists of those who contribute to public benefactions, and whom we stigmatize as cold-hearted, may be doing a world of good with their funds by dispensing them in individual and private charities.

We are apt to blame the young men for their extravagance in cigars and clothes. Might we not be the same if placed in the same circumstances? But how little they give in charity, you say! Well, how much do we call upon them, personally? scarcely ever! We put them down as uncharitable and extravagant, but we do not try in any manner to prove it. We call upon their parents and leave them alone. No doubt they read in the newspapers of the want, suffering and destitution of the poorer classes, but, not seeing it for themselves, they lay it to the brain of some sensational reporter who wishes to create an excitement. How should they be sure that there is so much want in the world? They do not see it in the parties they go to, the amusements they attend.

Where overskirts are worn, aprons will probably be the style throughout the summer. Imported dresses show a change from very deep to short aprons, although the dresses made here have not as yet been in imitation of them in this respect. Many dresses are, of course, worn without over-dresses. A favorite style for making the skirts to these is either perfectly plain in front and elaborately trimmed behind, or elaborately trimmed in front and plain behind.

Overskirts are not lined, nor generally are other skirts, as all drapery is made clinging to show as much as possible the natural figure.

The skirts of all handsome dresses are faced on the inner edge with plaitings of muslin, edged with patent valenciennes lace; this, and the handsomely gored and trained underskirts, which are cut nearly the length and exactly the shape of the dress skirt, make them "stand out" sufficiently, while yet falling in graceful folds. The shape of the underskirt is a very important matter with the present style of dress. It is indispensable that they are gored close, and made so that length and fullness will not be massed behind.

There is a certain kind of plain, all silk, heavily meshed grenades, which are just as standard as black silk; many ladies as soon be without one as the other, and, indeed, one is nearly as useful and available as the other. But these are not the fashionable grenades *par excellence*. The latter always change their style and pattern every season, and this year make their appearance in small and large checker-board patterns, the squares in with silk netting of cobweb fineness, differing in size, the broad or narrow bars crossing like ribbons and alternately in squares of ribbed satin, plain silk, or crêpe.

There is no doubt that we are to have a quadriga season, not of high-colored tarts, but of dark brown plaid and soft gray tints well blended. These are in broken, irregular plaids, even cross-bars, pin-head checks, large blocks, and every possible arrangement of squares. They are usually shades of some quiet color, but the newest are "illuminated," as dealers say, by lines and bars of vivid scarlet, blue or ceru. Something of the illuminated lines appears in the trimmings, as pipings, facings and lining of bows, collar and sash ends. Beige will be the popular material in these designs, and a large percale.

All persons who do not know how to walk right on these sidewalks will be promptly furnished with Walker's dictionary.

All fruit-stands, if their proprietors will consent to it, will be rigidly moved off the walks.

All persons falling out of second-story windows upon these walks are expected to fall as light-heartedly as possible, and not break the paving slabs. If they find they are about to fall they can first come down and put out a straw bed. A little thoughtfulness in this will save much damage.

A wheelbarrow propelled by powerful hands is a very convenient thing on these sidewalks. They should be made low so as to sweep up with dispatch. A wheelbarrow in the hands of an expert will accomplish more real work in a day on a sidewalk than two men can imagine.

In passing a man it will be well to turn the same way when he starts to the right, then jump to the left, then back again; this can be continued until you get desperate, then make a straight bulge ahead, run him down, and go on your way rejoicing.

Turn all corners short and with speed; this will very often afford you an opportunity of

running against some other fellow and knocking him down, and greatly relieves the monotony of street life.

Bowing to every vailed lady on the street, thinking you know her, you are likely to be right once in a while, and when you are right it is such a relief of conscience.

Sporting men are expected to travel over these sidewalks in a shuffling gait.

Burglars must take the lockstep.

Persons who are not able are expected to walk with cane.

The absorbed step of the poet will be observed upon these sidewalks, but when he is so absorbed in day-dreams as to run against lamp-posts he shall not be looked on with any degree of allowance—especially if the allowance has already been great.

Nobody allowed on these walks except on business; if they have no business then they will have no business on these walks.

In the shop-windows along these walks people will always see something valuable—if it is only themselves.

Gentlemen preferring to sleep in the gutters with their heads on these curbstones, are requested not to snore and wake the town police—no such midnight disturbances tolerated.

Drunken men are expected to have such nice discriminations of gentility that they will walk in the street, because those who won't go home till morning are not allowed to take these walks.

When you slap the stranger on the back walking in front of you, thinking he is an old acquaintance, you will find it exceedingly difficult to get out of it the best way that you can.

It is something to be walking with another man and slip up on an orange peel it shall be your duty to get his permission in writing to catch hold of him in falling.

If you should stamp your toe in bowing to ladies, and fall down, you should feel just as careless and indifferent about it as you possibly can.

No man will be allowed to take up all the space in front of you on an orange peel it shall be your duty to walk in front of him in falling.

If you should stamp your toe in bowing to ladies, and fall down, you should feel just as careless and indifferent about it as you possibly can.

Book and insurance agents are cordially invited to walk a few inches off these sidewalks either to one side or above them.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

It is not certain that the waists to the spring dress will be made quite long, with high shoulders and narrow backs, a combination of the corsage and basque—

"APRIL"

BY FRANK M. EMBRIE.

April's myriad sunshine arrows
Have sliced through a hundred birds;
A thousand bows have been drawn;
Pansing, pinned her lustrous hair.

With her bronze-brown eyes a-sparkle
Quickly prancing, beam astray,

Snow-white aeronaut, she whirred,

Sent the smile-wealth on its way.

Soon the dainty, freighted message
Safely reached its destined port;

Soon its thought was set in motion;

Then the merry scribe had written:

"If you wish to know your fate;

With your pencil, gently pressing;

Open the lace-formed, mystic gate!"

Swift the noisy entrance touching;

When she shone, reflected mainly;

Only two words—"APRIL FOOL!"

Twilight drifted to its moorings;

Evening launched her silvered bark;

Sky-born sala cleft earth-born shadows,

Whithershade that human art?

Hope's bright dove that morn had wandered,

Night returned not olive branch—

Only wreathing boughs of cypress

Circled fate-words—waifs of chance.

Heart aches from is a Ocean:

Great billows are broached to foam;

Ocean wide must be the refuge!

For a heart whose peace has down!

"Harry! why are you at home?"

"No, I'm on Love's Ocean sailing."

Shine and shade, like April weather,

Kissed the joy-flushed cheeks, quills cool,

As he bent to catch the whisper,

Briefer yet, then—"April Fool!"

The Terrible Truth: or, THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE
WIDOW," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CO-
RAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

AN OLD ADAGE VERIFIED.

SIR RUPERT ARCHER was the sensation very soon after that. A handsome young baronet with a yearly income of ten thousand pounds, and an estate in Sussex, with wonderful reports of its extent and magnificence floating in the charmed atmosphere he frequented, was a worthy acquisition to New York upper tondom, and it was not long before Sir Rupert Archer was actually embarrassed from the manner in which he was besieged on all sides.

"For a young man of ordinarily modest pretensions, this is proving rather too much no tooriety," remarked the baronet to Vane Vivian, as they sat smoking together in the apartments of the former. "See that stack of cards and scented, rose-tinted notes, will you? Most of them from people I've never seen and never care to see. Why the deuce couldn't I have avoided this season of yours and timed myself to my real object in coming—a grand buffalo-hunt on those wide Western prairies. I might as well have gone to Brighton, at once, as to cross the Atlantic the last of October. I go to the country for a week, fortunately. I couldn't answer for my own sanity under an unbent strain like the fortnight past."

"Will you always be the same unpretending flower, Sir Rupert? This is of a piece with your running away from a party of American tourists at Florence who fell in love with you at first sight, and were determined to make a lion of you, willy nilly."

"I haven't your bravery, Vivian, as exhibited then or now. I'll never forget your coolness displayed in rescuing me from that nest of brigands I walked into with open eyes."

"A remarkablefeat, wasn't it, after you had held your own against eight of them for a good half hour, dropped three, and would have routed the rest but for their hope of reinforcement. The cowardly rascals never waited to look behind them when my seven-shooter opened on them from the rear. I remember you declared you would rather face the same situation over again than be dragged back to that tourist party in Florence."

"Notwithstanding which you were relentless in dragging me back. And, speaking of constitutional modesty, you certainly have your own share of it. I succeeded in making myself quite interesting to Miss Carteret, last evening, in relating how gallantly you had come to my rescue, and rendered the important service of saving my—to me—rather valuable life. It appears you had never even hinted the fact among your friends."

"Nothing to boast of, my dear fellow, since, as I remarked to like effect before, you were in the fairest possible way of saving yourself. But now suppose we go back to the original point. You are being bored to death, to take your own word for it, here in New York. What do you say to a month at Thornhurst, where we'll go for the Christmas festivities? I've been wanting to propose it ever since we met, but was almost afraid the attractions of the metropolis would prove too great an object against all we can offer you. Thornhurst is a fine old place for all that. Not to compare with your Sussex parks and manors, I dare say, but a spot we are rather inclined to be proud of. There's some game of the smaller sorts, plenty of liberty, and enough of the city element to accompany us, not to mention our standard families there. Do you think you can resign yourself to the prospect, Sir Rupert?"

"At least there was comfort in the fact that he had not totally ignored her cause for fear, as Vane had done. There was comfort to Nora, also, in the knowledge that one person beside herself did not "take particularly" to Owen Dare. All the rest, the colonel, Mrs. Grahame, Vane himself, considered Dare immaculate.

"Sir Rupert?" It was Mrs. Grahame, gliding up to interrupt their *tele-a-tete*. "Here are some of my guests absolutely complaining they have not had a glimpse of the English lion yet. Nora, if you must monopolize Sir Rupert, you should choose a more prominent position, and so gratify the laudable curiosity of our friends. Indeed, I must veto sequestration such as this."

And Mrs. Grahame swept the baronet away from the quiet corner to take up the role he protested against—the lion of the evening. She had strolled from the retired spot.

"What has Sir Rupert been saying all this time, Nora?" she asked, sinking down into the vacant place. The natural failing of the sex, inquisitiveness, was about the only failing which strict conventionalism had not crushed out of that exemplary matron. She also had a very thorough respect for aristocracy, titled aristocracy in particular, and, aside from her favoritism for Dare, nothing could have proved more gratifying than for "the fairest debutantes of the season, Miss Carteret, so ably chaperoned by the stylish Mrs. Grahame, you know," to make the brilliant match of the season by securing this wealthy nobleman.

"Well, for one thing, we were speaking of Vane."

"Really, Nora, it would appear in better taste if you did not so persistently make that unhappy young man the chief subject of your conversation. You may rue your open—hem!—regard for him sooner than you can suppose now."

"It appears to me that Vane is much the better for his association with Sir Rupert."

"Simply the reflex of what association with a gentleman of Sir Rupert's culture and standing cannot fail to impart, no matter how unworthy the object may be. I have it from the best authority that Vane is in desperate danger of winding up his own career on the shortest possible notice. He is getting himself hopelessly involved again, and as patient cannot last forever, he will very probably find the colonel's quite exhausted by this time."

"Your 'best authority' being, I presume, Mr. Owen Dare. That incomparable individual, as it chanced, formed the chief topic of our conversation on this occasion."

"A much more proper subject than the other, my dear. I can imagine you finding plenty to say of Owen Dare. Well!"

"Reversing his own particular rule, it was nothing good of him. Sir Rupert apparently

traveling of 'reckless days and restless nights' is apt to lead somewhere, and I'll find the end of it at the appointed time. By-the-by, don't let any consideration for me stand in the way if you've any notion of falling in love with Nore yourself, Sir Rupert."

They were both at a brilliant dinner-party given by Mrs. Grahame that same evening, in honor of Sir Rupert himself. He would leave for a short trip into the country on the following day, and Mrs. Grahame had determined that the dinner should eclipse anything of the sort which had gone before.

Nora was at her fairest, as the baronet leaned over her chair during the evening, for Miss Carteret was an exception to the modest Englishman's general avoidance of the sex. A very pretty, attractive little girl, this Miss Carteret was, and her greatest charm, in his eyes, was her lack of all affection, her natural candor and truthfulness.

"I never was more delighted with any young lady in my life," Sir Rupert mused, running his fingers through that rippling bronze beard, looking down upon the bright, graceful head, the fair outline of face, and snowy throat. "And yet I am not the least in love with her myself. She is not at all after my ideal—that is, the ideal I have pictured dimly as some day filling the vacancy at Archer Hall. But I believe in my soul it would be the salvation of Vivian if he once came under the influence of this brown-eyed fairy."

"Sir Rupert Archer, where have your thoughts gone, pray? Are you aware that you have been answering my remarks quite indiscriminately—that you said 'yes' to my twice-repeated question of your opinion regarding Niilsom and 'very fine' when I asked if you intended visiting Washington during the session there. And you were looking at me as though you might have been gazing 'down the corridor of time,' instead."

"And I have left my impression there quite ahead of time. I was not aware I had fallen dreaming, but you American young ladies are so remarkably wide awake that I must look sharp after myself. Has Vivian told you that I have accepted his invitation to go to Thornhurst?"

"I have scarcely passed three words with Mr. Vivian all the evening, but Mrs. Grahame found opportunity to whisper the glad tidings. Let me commend the excellent taste you have displayed, Sir Rupert. New York is delightful, but Thornhurst surpasses it. There is only one drawback to my perfect enjoyment at either place."

"And that is?" he asked.

"Owen Dare. That man is coming to be the *tebe noir* of my existence. Sir Rupert, do you imagine the influence he contrives to exert over Vane is for any good?"

The brown eyes looked up at him a trifle anxiously, while the dainty flush in the sensitive face deepened perceptibly.

"Really, I have not given Mr. Owen Dare credit for exercising any influence over Vivian. Vane is not the sort of person to be easily influenced. I confess that I never took particularly to Mr. Dare, however, not even when I saw more of him than I have done here, upon the continent."

"I am morally certain that Owen Dare has some deep-rooted spite against Vane. I know him to be a hypocrite; I believe him thoroughly unprincipled. I have caught him once or twice, when he thought himself unobserved, with a look in his eyes, not a pleasant look, and one I am sure which bodes no good to Vane. I tried to warn him once, but he would not listen to me. You are his friend, Sir Rupert; if any one can counteract Dare's influence, you can. Persuade Vane to trust me to your influence he contrives to exert over Vane is for any good?"

"Colonel Vivian had a shrewd suspicion that Vane had not so completely reformed but his own favor might be of considerable importance at this present time. He had been indulgent; he had paid Vane's debts twice, and had sworn roundly that not one penny more of his should ever be devoted to the same purpose; but it was a characteristic of the colonel's never to mean one-fourth of what he said, and during the past night he had laid in his bed revolving how he might raise any obligations since incurred in a private way provided the young man fell in readily with his wishes. For the present he was willing to ignore the possibility of any demand upon him.

"I'll be hanged if you don't find that I mean it at last, sir. I've borne with your unfilial conduct, with your open disregard of my commands, for the last time, I tell you. I gave you an inkling of what my expectations were when we talked of these affairs before. I can't say whether you've proved yourself more obedient in keeping clear of these accursed gambling-hells and throwing your betting book into the fire, as I very strongly advised, or if you were twice my son and a thousand times more important than you are, you should turn a now leaf to your account right speedily. Do you suppose I am going to have Thornhurst squandered away by a roistering, dissolute vagabond? I've been too lenient with you before now. You're come to think you can turn the thumbscrews on me to extort anything through this foolish fondness I've indulged too long. By heavens, if you were twice my son and a thousand times more important than you are, you should turn a now leaf to your account right speedily. 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"It's going to work!" he muttered; "the dose is strong and bad enough to affect me. I began to have an idea that my head was cast-iron to-night. I shall sleep; I feel sleepy already. That cursed stuff is making my brain reel like a top."

And it was no wonder, for he had swallowed a good half-pint at one draught.

With an unsteady step, Dick blew out the candle, and, in the darkness, groped his way to the boxes that were to serve him as a bed for the night.

Lying down upon the rude couch, he drew the blanket over him and closed his eyes.

The fumes of the whisky had fired his brain, and strange, fantastic forms seemed to be dancing around him in the darkness.

In the strange excitement that he had labor-ed under, he had never thought to fasten the door of the shanty after him.

Finally, overcome by the power of the liquor he had swallowed, he fell into a restless sleep—a sleep in which the scenes of the night came back to him with terrible earnestness, yet disordered and uncertain.

Again he saw the golden-brown hair and dark blue eyes of Bernice; again the vision of the "Heart-woman" loomed threateningly before him, but, by his side, like a guardian angel, the girl of the Eldorado saloon stood; her red-gold hair floated carelessly in the wind and waved around her head like the holy circle of light that crowned the locks of the saints of old.

Then around his bedside, stole dark and lowering forms with stealthy tread.

The golden-haired maid vanished in affright. Talbot would have stretched out his arms to have detained her, but some unknown power linked his wrists together and he could not separate them. He attempted to cry out, but a damp substance that seemed of spongy texture was pressed upon his nostrils. A strange, subtle perfume floated on the air. It entered his head and ascended to the brain. A thousand stars twinkled before his eyes; his head whirled round and round like a gigantic wheel, then came a sudden explosion—an explosion without noise, but producing endless showers of fiery sparks, and then—all was still.

"Is this death?" Talbot questioned to himself. His mind was in a maze.

He felt a cool wind playing upon his temples, a rough jolting, too, as if he was being conveyed in wagon over an uneven road. He tried to open his eyes; he succeeded, but darkness still was before him. The truth flashed upon his bewildered brain; he was blindfolded. He essayed to raise his hands to tear the bandage from his eyes, but found that they were bound together at the wrists, and some unknown power held them down.

It did not take Injun Dick long to guess what had happened. Part of the frightful dream was reality. Dark forms had stood around him. They had bound his hands together, stupefied him by some powerful drug, placed upon a sponge and pressed against his nostrils. Then he had been placed in a wagon and now was being carried—where? That ride he could not guess.

Suddenly the wagon halted. Powerful arms bore Dick from the wagon and placed him upon his feet.

Talbot guessed that the end of this mysterious proceeding was at hand.

"Let him see," said a stern voice.

The bandage that had been placed over his eyes was suddenly removed, and Talbot stared around him in wonder.

Six men surrounded him, all clad in long black cloaks and wearing black masks, through which shone gleaming eyes. Each one of the masked men—except the one taller than the rest, who seemed to be the chief and confronted Talbot—held in his hand a six-shooter, cocked and leveled full at Injun Dick's breast.

A single glance told Talbot where he was. He stood upon the crest of one of the ridges that looked down upon Spur City from the north-west. A mile or so in the distance he could see the waters of the Rees river, rippling silver in the moonlight. Between him and the mining-camp was a little clump of pines; at his back the mountain ridges rose to meet the sky, and down upon the strange scene shone the full, round moon.

"What do you mean by this masquerading folly?" asked Talbot, scornfully. "Do you think to frighten me by child's play?"

"Silence, prisoner!" cried the chief of the masked men, sternly.

"Prisoner?" demanded Talbot, not a whit afraid.

"Yes, you are now standing before your judges," replied the masked man.

"And who are you that dare to constitute yourselves my judges?" asked Talbot, defiantly.

"The Vigilantes!"

For a moment a nervous look shot over the face of Talbot, but in a second it was gone.

"You lie!" he said, boldly. "The Vigilantes don't come in secret disguise. If you are anything, you are a band of masked assassins."

"Bold words will avail you but little. Listen to the charge," said the chief, calmly. "You are Dick Talbot, commonly called Injun Dick, gambler, cheat and bully."

"You lie!" cried Talbot, fiercely; "if I had my hands free, you would not dare to say such words to my teeth. I play cards, true; few men in Spur City, or from here to the Pacific, that do not. I am no cheat, but play a square game and wrong no man out of his gold-dust. If I win, it is because Heaven has given me brains; perhaps I don't use them as I ought to, but that's my affair. I'll have to answer that hereafter, not on this earth. As for being a bully, that's a falsehood. There don't stand a man on this earth to-day that can truthfully say that I ever picked a quarrel with him. I have used the strength and skill that nature has given me to protect myself, and I've taken the part, too, of a little man against a big one. If you call this acting the bully, then I am one."

"Dick Talbot, look down at your feet," said the chief, in the same cold, calm voice as before.

Talbot obeyed the command.

"Well?"

"What do you see there?"

"I see a hole in the ground that looks as if it was dug for a grave."

"You have guessed right; it is your grave."

"Mine?"

"Yes, unless you swear to leave this valley before the sun sets to-morrow."

"See here!" cried Dick boldly; "perhaps I've trod on the toes of some of you guys. You want revenge. I'll give you a fair shake for it, that is, if you've got any manhood about you. Unbind my hands; give me a revolver and fifty foot start. I'll stand my ground and fight the whole six of you."

"Judges do not fight with prisoners," sternly replied the chief.

"No, nor cowardly hounds like you, when you meet a man who doesn't value his life more than a brass button in a good fight," retorted Talbot, bitterly.

"Will you leave Spur City?"

"Never, until I'm carried out of it feet first, or a regular association of the citizens tell me that my presence is unwelcome. Then, I'll go. But the power of men who are afraid to show their faces I laugh at. I was going to leave the ranch to-morrow, anyway; but now, since you come to threats, two, we can play at that game. Make me go if you can!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAWYER'S GUESS.

With a calm face and an undaunted bearing, Talbot faced the masked men.

"You defy our power, then, and refuse to go?" the chief of the six asked.

"Yes, that's about the English of it," Dick replied.

Dick Talbot, your life is at our mercy, but we will not take it at present. This is but a warning. We give you three days to leave Spur City. At the end of that time death will surely come if you defy our power, disregard our warning, and remain."

"You've trapped me this time, but you'll never get a second chance at me, I can tell you that," Dick said, scornfully.

"We'll run the risk of that," the masked man replied, dryly. Then he made a signal.

One of the masked men stepped forward and replaced the bandage over Talbot's eyes. Again Injun Dick was lifted from his feet by the strong arms, and replaced in the wagon, that stood a little distance off.

Talbot felt the jolting motion of the wagon descending the hill. Then the damp sponge was pressed against his nostrils. He did not attempt resistance; he knew that it would be useless; but he strove to resist the subtle influence of the drug; his will was powerful, but the drug more powerful still.

Little by little he felt that his senses were leaving him; his head swam round; again he saw the shower of sparks, felt the motion of the whirling wheel, and then—all was blank.

When Talbot's senses came back to him and he opened his eyes, the morning sun was shining through the little window of the shanty. He lay on his back on the rude couch, just as he had cast himself down to sleep the night before.

With a vacant look, Talbot gazed around him. For a moment he believed all the events of the night had taken place in dreamland, but as he turned his head around from the blanket on which his head lay, came the peculiar odor of the drug that had been administered to him.

Slowly, Talbot rose to a sitting posture. There was a strange, odd feeling about his head; a sort of dull, throbbing pain.

"It's no dream!" he muttered; "they dosed me well last night. Get up and get off! Not if I know myself!" and he compressed his lips firmly as he spoke. "This is going to be an awful run of luck; just as I expected. I had made up my mind to 'leavant' and now I'm forced to stay. Bad cards ruin the best player; what can a man do against luck? They sha'n't frighten me out of the ranche, though. There's some deep game under all this."

For a few minutes Talbot sat, motionless, his eyes fixed upon the ground, his mind busy in thought.

"Vigilantes!" he exclaimed, suddenly; "not much! Those fellows last night were more like Overland Kit's band than like the members of a vigilance committee. Who is there in Spur City that would profit by my absence? That's the question. Let me discover that, and then I can discover who those fellows were last night. They played their game right up to the handle. I didn't think that there was a man living that could catch me napping, but it's been done. The voice of the chief seemed familiar to me. I'll just look round quietly to day and see if I can't spot him."

Talbot looked at his watch.

"Five o'clock," he said; "I'll take a little walk up the valley, just to clear my head." He rose to his feet. "It's in the cards that I must stay in Spur City—that I must meet this woman whom I ought to fly from."

Dick left the shanty and strolled leisurely up the valley. His eyes were fixed upon the ground, his face overcast with thought.

Talbot was not the only early riser, for, as he walked up the river bank, a young man, apparently about his own age, clad in the rough garb of a miner, came along down.

He was a good-looking young fellow, though rather thin-visaged, with grayish eyes and curling brown hair.

"Good-morning," said the stranger, halting when he came up to Talbot; his voice betrayed the gentleman; "will you see the coach from Auster come in last night?"

"Yes," replied Talbot. The questioner was unknown to him.

"Was there a lady on board?"

"Yes," again replied Talbot; he was rather astonished at the question.

"A young, pretty girl and an elderly, white-haired gentleman," said the stranger.

"Yes; they're stopping at the Eldorado."

"Thank you," and the stranger passed on.

Here was more food for thought for Injun Dick. What had this young man to do with the Vigilantes, and how did he know that she was coming to Spur City?

The stranger proceeded at once to the Eldorado.

The heathen Chinee was just proceeding to close up the place when the young man arrived at the saloon.

Of him the young man proceeded to inquire what he wanted, the old lawyer entered the saloon.

The recognition between the two was extremely cordial, and no wonder, for they were father and son! The young man was James Rennet, who, educated for a lawyer by his father, had hung out his shingle in Frisco, as the metropolis of the golden State is generally termed in the Far West, got into a little scrape there, and had "absquatuated" to the mining region to avoid unpleasant consequences.

"Bold words will avail you but little. Listen to the charge," said the chief, calmly.

"You lie!" cried Talbot, fiercely; "if I had my hands free, you would not dare to say such words to my teeth. I play cards, true; few men in Spur City, or from here to the Pacific, that do not. I am no cheat, but play a square game and wrong no man out of his gold-dust. If I win, it is because Heaven has given me brains; perhaps I don't use them as I ought to, but that's my affair. I'll have to answer that hereafter, not on this earth. As for being a bully, that's a falsehood. There don't stand a man on this earth to-day that can truthfully say that I ever picked a quarrel with him. I have used the strength and skill that nature has given me to protect myself, and I've taken the part, too, of a little man against a big one. If you call this acting the bully, then I am one."

"Dick Talbot, look down at your feet," said the chief, in the same cold, calm voice as before.

Talbot obeyed the command.

"Well?"

"What do you see there?"

"I see a hole in the ground that looks as if it was dug for a grave."

"You have guessed right; it is your grave."

"Mine?"

"Yes, unless you swear to leave this valley before the sun sets to-morrow."

"See here!" cried Dick boldly; "perhaps I've trod on the toes of some of you guys. You want revenge. I'll give you a fair shake for it, that is, if you've got any manhood about you. Unbind my hands; give me a revolver and fifty foot start. I'll stand my ground and fight the whole six of you."

"Judges do not fight with prisoners," sternly replied the chief.

"No, nor cowardly hounds like you, when you meet a man who doesn't value his life more than a brass button in a good fight," retorted Talbot, bitterly.

swered; "he came here originally as a washer-woman, but the poor devil nearly starved for want of custom. You see, dad, a man here puts on a flannel shirt and wears it until it wears out."

"A nice region this is for a gentleman to come to," old Rennet said, in disgust. "But come, walk down the street with me; break fast will not be ready for some time, they tell me, and I have something important to say to you."

"All right."

The two proceeded down the street.

Spur City was just beginning to get up—we mean, of course, the inhabitants of the mining camp.

"You received my letter telling you of my intention to visit this place with Miss Gwyne."

"Yes," the son replied, "on a wild-goose chase after Patrick Gwyne."

"Exactly; young girls take queer notions in their heads sometimes."

"Well, this one is queer enough. Why, the chances are ten to one that this Patrick is dead and buried long ago."

"By-the-by, James," said the father, suddenly, "you wrote me that you were obliged to leave San Francisco, but you didn't explain the reason for so doing. I suppose some sort of a scrape, eh?"

"That's about the size of it, dad," replied the son, coolly. "But don't ask any questions; it isn't much of a scrape, anyway, only I didn't care about coming East from Frisco in a pine coffin, so I went off between two days, as the saying is. I couldn't make my salt as a lawyer, anyway; the professions are overdone on the Pacific coast; they want red-shirted workingmen out here, not black-coated gentlemen."

"That's the case in all new countries; but now to business. You remember Bernice Gwyne, of course?"

"Well, yes; I suppose I should know her if I should see her; I was never intimate with her, dad," the son replied.

"She is the heiress of her uncle's wealth as well as of that left by her own father; but she is determined never to touch one single penny of her uncle's property until she discovers whether his son, her cousin, Patrick Gwyne, is living or dead."

"So you wrote me."

"Of course it's only the whim of a foolish young girl. Now, I've been thinking over a little scheme. So far we haven't been able to discover the slightest trace of this Patrick Gwyne, except that when our coach was stopped by this road-agent, Overland Kit, last night, he put his head in at the window of the coach, apparently recognized Bernice, and pronounced her name. The thought occurred to me at once that he might be Patrick Gwyne."

"But then, again, it might be some one else who had known her in New York," James suggested; "it's astonishing how men from the East go to the bad here sometimes. Besides, this Overland Kit, from what I have heard of him, don't answer to Patrick Gwyne at all. Gwyne, as I remember him ten years ago, was a slight-built fellow with brown hair, good deal such a sort of man as this gambler, Dick Talbot, while the road-agent is a swarthy fellow, with jet-black hair and beard—a regular desperado."

"Yes, that's true," the old lawyer said, thoughtfully; "but now for my scheme."

CHAPTER IX.

A HUSBAND FOR BERNICE.

The old lawyer looked around him carefully, as if to assure himself that no one was within earshot.

The son looked at the father in astonishment; he couldn't imagine what the scheme of the old lawyer could be.

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calling Queen Victoria by her Christian name, had they chanced to meet her, as the stately and cold little Albino.

"No, my dear! She was merely warning me about the weather."

"Why, what ails the weather?"

"Nothing that I can see. Miss Forest, though, it seems, has had private information from the clerk of the weather, that it is going to rain."

"And we will have a thunder-storm before long," said D'Arville, whose eyes had been dreamily fixed on the graceful figure of the lady before him, lifting them now to the sky. "Look at that cloud!"

"Oh, it will blow over! Don't predict evil! Sorrow's soon enough when it comes."

"I wonder what Señor Mendez is saying to Eve," exclaimed Hazel. "How devoted he looks, and how he bends down to catch every word! What shines these old fellows do take to girls, now and then!"

"Señor Mendez is not old," said Mr. Schaffer, blushing, glancing sideways at D'Arville, whose brows were contracting. "He is a fine-looking man, and in the prime of life. When do you suppose Miss Eve will go to live in her castle in Spain, Hazel?"

"Shortly, I should think, for it is a mutual strike!"

"Indeed! has she told you so?"

"Oh, in! no! Catch Eve talking about such a thing, but I know the symptoms, you see," said Hazel, gravely. "And—goodness me! how dark it's getting!"

"We are in for a wetting! Miss Forest was right, after all!" said D'Arville. "Listen to that!"

It was sharp and sudden peal of thunder, followed by a vivid flash of lightning, and great drops of rain. The whole face of the sky had blackened with astonishing rapidity, and the storm was upon them in its fury. Worst of all they had been riding fast, and had left the village behind them, and were out now on a lonely country road, with no house in sight.

Hazel gave a little screech of dismay.

"Good gracious, Paul! whatever will we do? It's going to pour down straight, and I've got my new hat on!"

But one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; but it was only human nature—girl's first idea in a tempest is about her hat!

Before Paul could offer consolation, there was another deafening thunder-clap, another sheet of flame, a rush of rain, another wild shriek from Hazel, and a cry from D'Arville.

The horses of the pair before them had taken flight, at least the gentleman's had, and was flying off like mad; and the lady's, started by the proceeding, was dashing off at full speed after it. It was quite evident Eve had lost all management of her steed, only a half-tamed thing at best.

"She will be thrown! she will be killed!" shouted Paul Schaffer, excitedly, "and Men- dez cannot help her. Great heavens! she is down!"

It was true; the frightened animal had thrown her, and was away like the wind. D'Arville, his face perfectly white with horror, dashed the spurs into his horse, and in five seconds after had vaulted off and lifted the prostrate form in his arms, with a passionate cry:

"Eve, my darling! My darling, are you killed?"

No; or if she was, his words had magic power to charm her back to life, for the dark eyes slowly opened and looked up in his face with her whole heart in their depths. In a rapture he bent over her, reading it all.

"Thank God! Oh, thank God, she lives still! My darling, are you hurt?"

Her face was perfectly colorless, and there was blood upon it, but she forced a smile and made an effort to rise. But he held her fast, though the other two were riding up.

"Eve, they are here—one word before they come. You know I love you!"

Yes, she knew it. One little hand still in his, one other glance from the dark eyes, and he was a happy man. The other two were beside them, with faces of consternation, and the rain was coming down in torrents.

"Oh, Eve! are you much hurt?" was Hazel's shrill cry, forgetting all about her own hat.

"Set me up, please, and I will see," Eve said, faintly, smiling up in D'Arville's face. "My head struck something; but I think, on the whole, I was more frightened than hurt."

She stood up as she spoke, very pale, and with the blood flowing from the cut in the forehead, but with no broken bones.

"Thank Heaven, it is so well!" exclaimed D'Arville; "but Eve, what are we to do with you? It won't mend matters to stand in this doorway."

"Eve!" Paul Schaffer's keen glance flashed from one to the other, and read the whole story. It was the first time Claude D'Arville had ever called her other than Miss Hazelwood.

"There is a house over there," said Hazel, pointing. "Let Eve take your horse, Monsieur D'Arville, and we will be under cover in no time."

"An excellent idea! Miss Eve, let me assist you to mount!"

"But you!" Eve hesitated, "you will be exposed to all this rain."

"It is of no consequence about me, I won't melt." Here, up with you!"

Eve mounted his horse, and bent down to him as she gathered up the reins.

"You will hurry after us," she said; "anxiously, and his answer was the bright smile that so vividly lit up his dark, handsome face."

"Yes, I will hurry. Off with you now."

They dashed off, leaving him to follow on foot, and in five minutes were at the house. It was a sort of wayside inn, and held other storm-bound wayfarers it seemed; for a gentleman stood in the open doorway, watching the storm. He drew back as the young ladies, with uplifted skirts, skinned past him into the parlor, and Eve thought of Paul Schaffer's description of the lord of Black Monk's—grave and middle-aged, tall and stately, gentlemanly and rather distinguished-looking?" and made up her mind that this was Lord Landsdowne. The parlor was tenanted, too.

In a leather easy-chair in the chimney-corner a lady sat—a lady richly dressed in silk and velvet, with diamonds flashing on her white hands, whose haughty and handsome face Eve had seen before. It was Lady Landsdowne. Eve remembered the proud, cold face, framed in golden-brown hair, that had looked from the carriage window that first evening in Monkswold village. She was dressed in walking costume now; her blue velvet mantle falling off her sloping shoulders, the dainty bonnets, a snow-flake, sprinkled with silver, still on her head. She had been looking into the fire, her brow contracted in an impatient frown when they entered, and the first glances had been careless and supercilious enough. But that glance changed, fixed, grew wild and amazed, and the bright blue eye dilated on Eve as if she had been a ghost. There had been a stifled cry, too, and a half bound from her chair, but she sank back as the eyes of the trio turned on her in wonder. Her face, her very

lips had turned ashen white, and her blue eyes still were riveted on Eve's face, with a look none present could comprehend. What was there in that beautiful face to inspire that look of fear, of affright, of positive horror? Paul Schaffer made a step toward her.

"Madam, you are ill—you are—"

The sound of his voice was magical. She started to her feet at once.

"Yes," she said, sharply; "you have started me. I cannot bear the sight of blood! What is the matter with that young lady?"

"She has had a fall from her horse and has cut her forehead. I regret that our entrance should have so disturbed you."

The lady's only reply to Mr. Schaffer's civil speech was to gather up her mantle and sweep past him to the door, with a stormy rustling of silk. There the gentleman in waiting met her with an inquiring face.

"Has the carriage not come yet, my lord?" she demanded, in the same sharp tone.

"Oh, isn't she a Satan?" Hazel whispered to Eve.

"Not yet," the gentleman answered. "It will be here presently, though."

"I want to go," said the lady, still more sharply. "I don't choose to sit in a room crowded with people. Who are those persons who have just entered?"

"Civil, that—upon my word!" exclaimed Hazel, whistling, while Eve's eyes flashed.

"My dear," they heard the gentleman say, in a low tone, "they are most respectable. They are the Hazelwoods. You had better wait."

"I don't choose to wait any longer," the lady, almost passionately, cried. "I shall go if I have to walk, sooner than sit among such a crowd! Go and see if the people who have this place have no sort of conveyance at all that will take us home!"

"Here is the carriage, at last!" exclaimed the gentleman, in a tone of intense relief. And as he spoke, a handsome carriage, drawn by handsome horses, and with the arms of the Landsdowne family upon the panel, drew up before the door. Right after it came cantering a rider at a furious pace. It was Señor Mendez, in a state of intense excitement and anxiety about Eve. He had seen the horses at the door, and sprung from his saddle at once, and strode past Lord and Lady Landsdowne into the parlor.

"Eve—Miss Hazelwood—are you hurt? There is blood on your face!"

"It is nothing—only a scratch," Eve answered. "Are you sure you are quite safe yourself? It was a second edition of Mazeppa or John Gilpin—I hardly know which."

"Oh, I am safe enough, only completely blown, and frightened out of my wits about you. I knew you were here when I saw the horses."

He took off his hat as he spoke, to fan him self, revealing his face for the first time to the pair without. As he did so, there was a wild shriek from the lady, a sudden reel forward, and a something fell to the floor like a log. The cry was echoed by the gentleman, and all rushed out. Lady Landsdowne had fainted, and was lying on the floor like one dead.

"The lady has fainted!" said Señor Mendez, coolly. "Can we be of any assistance to your lordship?"

John, the coachman, obeyed, and Lord Landsdowne carried my lady in his arms, got her in with John's help, followed, and gave the order to drive home. Our party stood in the doorway until the carriage was out of sight, out of sight, out of sight.

"Is my lady mad, I wonder?" asked Paul Schaffer. "What made her faint?"

"And what made her scream and stare at Eve so when we came in?" asked Hazel. "She must want a square of being sound, or she would never cut up so."

"What does Eve think?" Señor Mendez asked, looking at her with an inexplicable smile.

But Eve did not answer. She was watching a figure coming through the slanting rain, with a look at once tender and anxious in her eyes.

"What does Eve think?" Señor Mendez asked, looking at her with an inexplicable smile.

"Do you see?" Señor Mendez said, looking significantly at Paul Schaffer, and that young gentleman smiled superciliously.

"I see Miss Eve wears her heart on her sleeve, for days to peek at, and that it is D'Arville's turn to-day—mine may come to-morrow!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 257.)

Old Bull's-Eye,
THE LIGHTNING SHOT OF THE PLAINS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

CHAPTER XXII.

A LEAP FROM THE PAST.

BUT the attack had been expected, and the Caynas found the pale-faced ready for them. Snatching up a brand that had been carefully buried beneath ashes to keep it alive, Old Bull's-eye whirled it swiftly around his head until the stick burst into a strong blaze, when he thrust it into the pile of combustibles that had been saturated with oil and grease for this very purpose. Rapidly igniting, the pile flamed up furiously, casting a lurid glow through the entire village, revealing every form with the distinctness of noonday.

Desperately brave and reckless as the Caynas were, they could not long face those terrible weapons whose black muzzles vomited forth death without intermission. With only faint-edged arrows and stone tomahawks to match these, the wonder was that they did not retreat before.

The loud, warning voices of Old Bull's-Eye and Dugrand called the plainmen back as they pressed recklessly after the cannibals, and happily were they obeyed. Among the ravined and broken hills, unfamiliar with the natural traps and pitfalls, the Man-hunters would have been at the mercy of the Caynas.

Rifle in hands, they kept close guard during the short time before the rising of the sun, but the Caynas did not return to the attack.

Twenty hours in the midst of plenty had made new animals of the horses, and when day dawned, and kept up without a break, save for an hour's rest at noon. They were eager to reach the grove of trees that surrounded the spring where the Red Hawks had found the end of their earthly trail.

Old Bull's-eye kept close beside Carmela, greatly to Luis' disgust, who found that the maiden turned a cold ear to his flattering speeches. He would have a hard task in winning the proud beauty, who had not yet forgotten the lessons of Chiquita. The scout was pleased to see this, for he still believed that the father of Luis was none other than the

Antone Barillo who had eloped with Dolores, to keep the ledges above the pass clear of enemies.

mes, they trotted briskly away from the home of the Caynas.

During that day's ride, Old Bull's-Eye seemed to avoid Carmela, and acted more like the wild, reckless borderer the young hunters had first known. In truth he was anything but happy. The dark, glowing beauty of Carmela, her fearlessness during the trials and perils of the trail, had won upon him until he found himself almost worshiping her. And then, after her confessing that his love was reciprocated, after declaring that she would be his, wholly and entirely, to find that his promised wife was his daughter—that was a bitter blow.

Carmela, too, did not see her usual self, but rode along quietly and subdued, and though her eyes followed every motion of the plainsman, she made no effort to join him, or to speak unless he first addressed her.

"Has the carriage not come yet, my lord?" she demanded to her feet at once.

"Oh, isn't she a Satan?" Hazel whispered to Eve.

"Not yet," the gentleman answered. "It will be here presently, though."

"I want to go," said the lady, still more sharply.

"I don't choose to sit in a room crowded with people. Who are those persons who have just entered?"

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(To be continued—commenced in No. 257.)

It was after dark before they crossed the swell from which the *motte* could first be seen, and Old Bull's-Eye, who was in front, acting as guide, halted abruptly. A small point of light was visible, shining through the foliage. The grove was already occupied.

"Remain here until I come back. I'll soon find out who they are," muttered the scout, as he dismounted and glided rapidly forward.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE END OF A WEARY TRAIL.

OLD BULL'S-EYE quickly gained the *motte*, undiscovered, and pausing, listened intently. The subdued sound of human voices came to his ear, and he knew that a considerable force must occupy the timber. Prostrating himself, he crawled cautiously forward, passing through the line of undergrowth, soon reaching a point from whence

THE FROG WHO WOULD BE AS BIG AS AN OX.

BY J. M. JOT, JR.

A frog once sat beside a pond
Engaged in deep reflection;
He looked into the mud and thought
On "Natural Selection."
He thought on questions grave and deep—
Responsibilities! the "Descent of Man"
Wondering if this "Descent of Man"
Wasn't a brount about by woman.

Then wondering by that little pond,
His head all in a muddle,
He did not see an ox that came
To drink from out the puddle.

One hoof descending close to him
Out of his meditations,

And came in it of sending him
To join his dead relations.

Enraged on his hind legs that frog
Dashed toward the ox with fury,
And shook his clenched fists at him
As a lawyer at a jury.

"Halt!汝怒!" the frog shrieked out,
His teeth in madness champing,

"What do you mean by coming round
Near little people tramping?"

"If I could only find a rock
How terribly I'd fling it at you!"

He rolled his stones up the stage,
How I would like to mash you!"

Then he began to puff himself

Each moment growing bigger;

And truly looked much less a frog
Than an Indian-rubber figure.

"I'll grow to be three times your size,"

And then we'll see who's worsted,

But his stretched hide had grown too thin—

At the next breath it had got

How I would like to Go, tell each man

Who may have large pretensions,

That he must never ape the frog,

But keep his own dimensions."

The Snow Hunters:
WINTER IN THE WOODS.

BY C. DUNNING CLARK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG SEAL-HUNTER," "IN THE WILDERNESS," "CAMP AND CANOE," "BOD AND RIFLE," ETC., ETC.

IX.—"Calling" the Moose.—The Giants' Battle.

JACK coolly laid two or three large sticks upon the fire. In spite of his danger the lad was steady, and was trying to satisfy himself whether he had better fire when the panther crept closer to the fire. The young hunter could not withstand the temptation; so, laying his knife on the rock by his side, he raised his rifle, steadily sighted between the flaming eyes and pulled the trigger. For a moment he was stunned by the report in the confined space, but he retained his senses enough to grasp his knife and hold it out before him. The next moment he was prostrated by the rush of a heavy body, and felt that his keen knife had penetrated to the hilt in the body of the panther, expecting every moment to feel the terrible teeth and claws, he saw that the beast lay quietly upon its side.

"Rubbed out, as sure as I am Jack Edgel," he cried. "If I ain't having the best luck of any one—ah! There comes the old chap!"

He heard, far off, the scream of the male panther calling to his mate. Loading his rifle rapidly he replenished the fire and waited for the coming of the foe. He had not long to wait, for he heard the rattle of the sharp claws upon the hard rock, and the huge form of the male panther gilded into the outer cavity.

"Come on, old chap!" cried Jack, as he hurled a blazing fragment at the newcomer. "Make yourself at home—do."

The panther leaped back out of reach and bounded out of the opening. Jack, now grown utterly reckless, dashed after him and arrived at the mouth of the cave just as the panther got over his first fright. As the muzzle of the rifle was thrust forward, the panther seized it in his white teeth, the muzzle resting against the roof of his mouth. Jack pulled the trigger at the right moment and the panther fell at his feet, his head literally blown to atoms.

"What took your roof off?" shouted Jack. "Hip, hip, hooray! I guess I've cleaned out the family!"

He went back into the cave, pushed his fire out into the center, cooked the moose tongue which he had brought, and made a royal meal. This done, he blocked up the mouth of the cave with loose stones, replenished his fire, and slept soundly until morning. As he went out of the cave he heard near by the report of a rifle, and fired his own in return. Half an hour later he was joined by Dave Blodgett, who made the welkin ring with shouts of joy. They had not left the trail since they missed him and had found him at last.

The whole party quickly came up and crowded about Jack, as he exhibited the trophies of his skill—the two panthers and the living cube—which he had determined to keep alive. The hunters had "cached" their moose meat near the ravage, and taking the sled, had followed upon Jack's trail, led by the Indian, who had evinced the utmost anxiety for the safety of the boy. He now danced about Jack, rapturously, slapping him on the back with his open palm and striving in every way to show how delighted he was.

"I am almost willing to be lost again, for the sake of finding out whether I've got friends," said Jack, as he returned the boisterous greeting of the twins, and shook his uncle warmly by the hand; "I don't see what reason All has to like me, after all I have done."

"What care!" roared Alf. "You take me—all good; me catchum good master that day. Bill Becker big heap fool, you much bet! You big chief one day, come up hunt, take Alf for guide, eh?"

"That's the kind of talk, Alf!" said Dave Blodgett. "I knowed you hed the clear grit even when you consoled with that bosom of destruction, Bill Becker. Now we're all together an' in the thick of the moose kentry, I'm goin' to show ye a little sport of another kind. See yer, my Injun friend, kin ye call moose?"

Alf answered by so exact an imitation of the lowing of the cow moose that Jack involuntarily reached for his rifle.

"That's good!" said Dave, with a delighted chuckle. "That's the best I ever heard—that beats me. We'll hev another moose hunt to-day, of another kind."

They were all equipped with snow-shoes, and following closely on the heels of Alf, entered a sheltered bay in the woods, where the pine trees stood so thick that convenient covers could be readily found in a dozen places. Here they took their stations, and Alf, stepping out into the open space, sent a loud, musical lowing echoing through the forest. So well

was it done that it was heard at quite a distance, in the keen, frosty atmosphere. He repeated the call twice, when an answer came back from the distant forest.

"Come in, Alf," said Dave, quietly. "The old cue hears yer musical voice, you bet."

Alf stepped back into the cover, and they waited quietly.

"He won't come," asserted Jack.

"That's it, little critter," said Dave. "It does beat all how consoly a boy gets when he has a tribe of good luck. Any other chap on ariath would hev bin chawed inter minute fragments by them painters, but you scraped clair. Them moose won't come, eh?"

"I don't believe they will."

"It's flyin' in the face of Providence to prove anything to a critter like you," sighed Dave. "Hark to that boy!"

The bellow of the moose was now heard close at hand, and Dave burst into a fit of chuckling from which he only roused himself to caution them all.

"Take keer now, boys. Thar ain't a more s'picious animaline on the airth than the moose. Ef a leaf stirs he's bound to find out what stirred it. Silent will."

Every one had cocked his rifle, and, resting on one knee, peered through the leafy cover for the giant game. The suspicious bull stopped soon, and Alf gave an imitation of the low grunting of the cow-moose, which took even Dave by surprise, and he looked at the Indian in mute admiration. A stentorian bellowing announced that the cautious animal was satisfied, and, to the astonishment of every one, a second bellow was heard in the forest, close at hand, like an echo of the first. The call of the moose had resulted much better than they hoped. Dave Blodgett held up two fingers, and as he did so, two noble specimens of the male moose stepped out into the opening.

The bulls, as they came out on opposite sides of the opening, glared furiously at each other and began to snuff the air angrily. A grin of delight overspread the face of Dave, and he signed to his friends to lower their weapons, for they were to witness a duel between the giants ends fatally for one or both.

The moose, as old age approaches, becomes misanthropic. First, he breaks away from the large herds and wanders about with two or three companions. Then, even this company grows offensive to him, and like the "rogue" elephant, he wanders alone in the forest, a perfect Ishmaelite of his race. These solitary bulls are absolutely fearless, and if they meet by chance a battle is sure to result, which generally ends fatally for one or both.

The bulls now in the opening were solitary.

Irritated at finding a rival in the way, the natural ferocity of their tempers was quickly augmented, and they began to paw the snow and send it flying backward, while they approached each other with the siding peculiar motion common to the domestic bull, their tails erect and their eyes flashing fire.

Just at the right moment, Alf uttered another low "moo" and as he did so, the animals clashed together with the fury of giants, and locking in a close grapple, each strove to force the other backward.

The call which Alf had imitated so well inspired them with the utmost fury. Snorting wildly, and exerting all their strength, they course of a long life, had even Dave Blodgett witnessed a scene like this, for the bulls were truly monarchs of their species.

Once they staggered apart, glaring with looks of mutual animosity, and stood panting while gathering breath for a new struggle. Their wrinkled fronts, under which gleamed eyes like living coals, lent new terrors to the scene.

Dave raised his hand warningly, and Alf repeated the call, and at the sound the bulls rushed together with greater violence than ever. So terrible was the shock that they bounded back like two balls colliding with equal force. The blood was now streaming from a great gash cut by the sharp forehoof of the first moose in the neck of his adversary. They reared upright like two dogs, grappled, striking like gladiators.

"End it, square!" whispered Dave. "You and your sons take the one on the right. Wait for the word."

Six rifles cracked as the giants were reared on their hind-feet, contending furiously. As if struck by bolts from heaven, the brute gladiators sunk down, and the snow was crimsoned with their flowing blood.

"Sometimes I feel right sorry for the work you have to do," said Dave, as he stepped out and administered the *coup de grace* to the struggling animals. "But, you've got two heads for your cabinet, Mr. Tracey, sech as men don't git once in a lifetime. But I wouldn't eat a piece of the meat sooner than I would eat a side of sole-leather. I'll git the heads fur you an' then we'll toddle home. It's mighty lucky we got here afore deer begin to drop their horns."

It was nearly noon when the loaded sled reached the ravage, where they took on such parts of the moose first shot as they fancied, and left the rest to the wolves.

The heads were preserved, and Dave Blodgett volunteered to use a certain preparation when they reached the cabin which would preserve them for all time. Turning down the hills, they reached the bed of the lake, laid their snow-shoes on the sled, strapped on their skates and started for home. As they did so, the long, tremulous howl of the wolf arose on the southern shore of the lake.

"Move yer paddles, boys," said Dave Blodgett. "I ain't anxious fur a fight with wolves on the ice. Ar' ye all loaded? Then git up on the word."

Mr. Tracey and Dave drew the sled; Alf pushed it behind, and the twins skated on the right and left, while Jack, with his panther-skins thrown over his shoulder, skylarked in front. Dave Blodgett, glancing uneasily to the right and left, saw a number of black spots coming up from all directions, concentrated in one moving mass, and come on with lightning speed.

"Wolves, by the big rocker in which Fingal was rocked!" shouted Dave. "Come in hyar, Jack!"

The boy obeyed, and every one prepared his weapon in silence.

"You've all got double rifles 'cept me an' Alf," explained Dave. "Now, look here: you four ride together when I give the word, an' Alf an' me will hold our fire. Then don't you fire at 'em unless they pitch in too lively. Hyar, Spot, hyar, Danger, come to heel!"

The dogs obeyed—Spot willingly enough, but Danger uttering low growls of discontent and wrath. The wolves came on, barking savagely, and evidently mad with hunger.

"Halt!" cried Dave. "Give it to 'em!"

Four rifles cracked, and, discharged into the compact flock, no wonder they died without execution. Then Alf and Dave let fly, and added to the slaughter.

"On—on!" cried Dave. "Give the dirty thieves time to chaw up the' own friends. They'll do it, never fear."

They had passed over half a mile of ice before the wolves again took up the pursuit. By this time every rifle was reloaded, and as the snarling band galloped up to the sled, they received a warmer reception than ever, and again the sled dashed on.

"Give me that big painter-skin," said Dave.

Jack handed out the article, and when the wolves came on again, and the rifles again began to play, Dave sprang out on all fours, with the shrill scream of the panther. Instantly every tail was turned, and every wolf was seen madly dashing up the lake in furious flight, leaving Dave Blodgett extended on the snow, laughing like a hyena. The panther-skin had done its work!

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Frost.

BY LUCILLE HOLLIS.

"SURELY, to-night, I am the personification of the character my dear friends choose to ascribe to me; they ought to recognize me!" Evelyn Kurtz, exclaimed, with a hard bitter smile.

"Nay," she said, slowly, "I would willingly give all the blessings I have for one I have not." And then her partner brought her ice, bowing to Leroy Cummings, who replaced his fingers upon the thin wrist.

"It was Miss Kurtz; there was no mistaking her voice," thought Mr. Cummings, wearily, as he re-entered the thronged salons. "It is cruel, cruel, that I must catch the infatuation with which she inspires men! I, I, a man with no heritage but shame and poverty, to be mad with love for her! Verily I am insane, to dare worship her as I do. Thank God, we are so immeasurably apart in station that no harm can come of my madness! Is she, can she be, wholly as cold as people say she is? As cold as that she chooses to represent to-night? What matter what she is to me?"

But down the room the Frost glittered now, and Leroy made his way toward it.

"Miss Kurtz," he whispered, "will you honor me with one dance?"

"With pleasure, Mr. Cummings; I had no idea you knew me. Shall I keep this waltz for you? I would give you a choice, but all are promised. I think I can arrange about this."

"You honor me too much. Believe me, I shall not lightly value the pleasure."

The crowd parted them. When they met again, and the courtly woman was within his encircling arm, her lustrous eyes meeting his, masks had been laid aside, and the rare, madly-beautiful face of her dusky, creamy face was close to his own. Was it strange that for the few moments he held her thus his love was veritable madness? Was it not a marvel that each seemed to the other cold and unimpassioned? Is it not a false world that would have made one word of what burned in both hearts seem a stain if uttered?

He sought a place, the dance ended, where Miss Kurtz could get a breath of coolness from the conservatory, and stood fanning her.

"La belle Kurtz is regal to-night, is she not?"

And such an appropriate costume as she has chosen! Who do you think she is making her latest victim? Mr. Cummings, the young writer. Poor fellow! he is to be pitied if he gets infatuated with her heartless majesty. She is certainly an iceberg—veritable frost!"

The words came distinctly from among the plants, gleaming with blossoms, just a hand's breadth away. Distinctly to Cummings, who fairly shivered with pain and anger, and bit his lips under their golden mustache until drops of blood reddened them. Distinctly to the woman at his side, who, forgetful of the crowd about him, turned to him with a deathly face and misty, agonized eyes, andingly as if the poor writer were her equal, enthralling her.

"You know they do me injustice! Say you know it! that you do not believe what you just heard of me!"

This woman whom he loved so madly, though he had never seen any other phase of her character than that displayed by the perfection of her polished manners or graceful dignity, pleading passionately to him! Oh! God! help him not to forget himself!

"I do not believe what people say of you; but that you are good and noble—a woman worthy naught less than worship; and that you are in no wise to blame that I have come to reverence you above all your sex! Do not think too hardly of me that I have spoken the truth; for, believe me, I am quite conscious of my own madness!"

The words had passed since Leroy Cummings had breathed those words to Evelyn Kurtz, and passed from her presence. Since then they had never met. Wearily, with a deep sorrow in her heart, she moved daily among the poor and sick; languidly, coldly, more frostily than ever she smiled and talked, and danced in the salons of the rich, and rejoiced when Lent brought her rest and seclusion.

At last she told herself that there could be no unwomanliness in her, the heiress, suing to the poor Bohemian she loved. So she wrote to Cummings and told him what his words had meant to her, for she, Evelyn Kurtz, had loved him. To-day, his answer, bearing a date three days old, had been placed in her hands. His answer, blessing her for her kindness, but firmly stating that it was impossible for him to so far forget what was due to her or his own manhood as to take advantage of her mortal condescension.

With white lips she crushed the note in her hand, and went to her little chapel, to fight her battle with wounded pride and hopelessness and pain.

An hour later Miss Kurtz was treading the city streets on her daily round of errands of mercy.